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iii. *'The defenders' and 'the breath of men'*

Proof of the activity and identity of witches is sought first in the dreams of victims and of 'the defenders' (*abamanga*) of his village who are believed to have power to see and to fight witches in dreams. As we have seen, the witches are believed to leave their bodies sleeping and to fly through the air to the house of the man against whom they have a grudge, and there to enter his body while he sleeps, and either 'throttle' (*akupita*), 'trample' (*akubumpa*), or 'eat' (*akulya*) his inside. In the morning, or during the night, the victim wakes up more or less conscious of what has happened to him. If they come often, many nights running, he falls sick and may die, unless he takes steps to defend himself. The *defenders* (*abamanga*) are believed to be able to see and recognize the identity of the witches and to counter them in two ways. First by turning them back at night, saying: 'Where are you going to throttle your fellow? Go back!' and then driving them off with spears or striking a witch's python, so that the witch dies; and secondly, by reporting to neighbours and to the political authorities the names of the people they have seen engaged in witchcraft. An ordinary person can never recognize the witch who attacks him, even though he may be conscious that he is being throttled. And all these things happen in dreams: 'The witches go out in dreams to throttle people.' 'It is in dreams that "the defenders" recognize them.' Certain dreams, interpreted by a traditional symbolism, are taken as signs of being bewitched: 'If I dream that someone comes to fight me, perhaps he beats me with a stick, perhaps he overwhelms me and crushes me down to earth, perhaps he hits me with his fist; then I wake up and tell people: "Last night they came to throttle me." ' 'If I recognize people who come to fight me in my dreams that means I have myself the power of defence; if I do not recognize them then I have not.' 'If I dream that I am flying alone through the air high up at night, that means they have come to throttle me.' 'If I wake up suddenly at night in fear and sweating, even though I do not recollect the dream, I know they have come to throttle me.' 'Dreams of being chased, of being beaten, of the house burning, of one coming to the door and weeping for me as if I were dead, these are all signs of witchcraft.' Close friends tell one another

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their dreams—provided they have not dreamed of attacking one another—and when more than one of them has dreamed of X as an aggressor, then the presumption is very strong that X is a witch. Dreams to the Nyakyusa are the stuff of religious reality, and the very close association between witchcraft and dreams is apparent in the language—*injosi* meaning a dream, and *ubulosi* (the same root in the abstract noun class) meaning witchcraft. It is perhaps also significant, that *ukugoga* means to dream, and *ukugogwa* (in the passive form) means to be killed. Restless nights are taken as proof that either the witches or ancestors are troubling a man: 'We do not sleep' (*tukigona*) is the formal phrase in which village headmen or priests notify the chief that something is amiss in the country, and a ritual is required; and an ordinary person using the same phrase implies that he is harried either by the ancestors or by witches. 'You *may* sleep or you may not' (*ukigona*) is the commonest form in which a threat of witchcraft is made.

The vision and power of 'the defenders' (*abamanga*) comes from the same source as the power of the witches,[1] from pythons in the belly, the essential difference between the witches and 'the defenders' being that the latter use their power in accordance with law and morality, while the witches act for selfish ends, and their activities are illegal. This close association of 'the defenders' with the power of witchcraft is apparent in language, *ukumanga* being sometimes used almost synonomously with *ukulaga* for 'to bewitch', while *abamanga* means 'the defenders'.[2] There are, moreover, certain differences between the pythons of witches, and those of 'defenders'. In the first place, the condition of 'the

[1] For similar concepts among the Thonga and Anande cf. H. A. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, Vol. II, p. 516; E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic among the Azande*, pp. 224 ff.

[2] cf. the Bemba homage discussed by R. J. B. Moore in *Africa*, Vol. XIII, 1940, pp. 211 ff. and *Bantu Studies*, Vol. 15, 1941, pp. 37 ff.; the note on the use of this root in a number of languages in *Africa*, Vol. XVI, 1946, pp. 119–20; and C. M. N. White in *Africa*, Vol. XVIII, 1948, pp. 83–102.

I translate *-manga* in Nyakyusa as 'mystical power', *uku-manga* 'to exercise mystical power' (for good and evil), and *aba-manga* as 'those possessing mystical power', with the further implication that they use this power for defence. Writing in *Africa*, Vol. IX, 1936, pp. 85, and Vol. X, 1937, pp. 265 ff., we translated *aba-manga* as 'defender witches' and *aba-loi* as 'aggressor witches'. On further reflection, however, I have preferred to confine 'witch' and 'witchcraft' to those acting in a manner disapproved by their society, since this is common usage, and for want of a better term I call *aba-manga* 'the defenders'.

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'defenders' is not visible at an autopsy. Secondly, it is maintained that while a witch has several pythons, a defender has only one, and whereas witchcraft is always inherited or acquired in early childhood, a python of defence may be acquired later, through drinking medicine. Old Mwandosi, recognized by the Nyakyusa themselves as an authority on law and history, explained it to us thus: 'Some are born with pythons; they are those with many pythons, perhaps three. Some get them from medicine made of leaves which is given them to drink at the "coming out", they have only one, it is they who watch over the cattle, they are the village headmen (*amafumu*). He who has many pythons, who is born with them, having inherited them, suns them secretly at his home. He takes them out and suns them, then swallows them again, they are his intestines. Such a man is a great witch; he is the kind who is convicted of witchcraft. But the village headman who has got his python through medicine has only one, he does not sun it, he is not convicted of witchcraft, he only detects the witches in dreams. When he begets a child the latter will have one python only. If his son or daughter goes about throttling people, then his father says: "Where did you get many pythons? See! I have only one. It is you woman! (accusing his wife)." So they submit themselves to the poison ordeal. The man vomits and the ordeal catches the woman.' Mwandosi contradicted himself in this statement, first suggesting that the power of defence was only acquired through drinking medicines, and then that the child of a village headman inherited one python from his father. Most Nyakyusa maintain that the power of defence can be acquired in either fashion. The medicines drunk at the 'coming out' develop it even in an 'empty' man, but many men, including assistant headmen and ordinary citizens who are not specially treated at the 'coming out', are believed to have it. It is asserted that no woman have it, though many of them are spoken of as witches, and in particular instances informants implied that some women 'saw' the witches (cf. Document, pp. 250–3).

Mbukile confirmed Mwandosi's main point, saying: 'Some of us are empty, pure (*bunda*), we have no pythons, not one; some are 'defenders' and pure, they are those who watch over the country; such a man has only one python to watch over his country. The ruler of the country, the chief, also has one python; for both village headmen and chief watch over the country. Some are

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witches, they have two or three pythons, it is they who are caught by the poison ordeal.' 'Watching over the country' implies detecting the witches and turning them back, and also reporting them the next morning to the authorities. Particularly 'the defenders' watch over the cows, and they are said actually to increase the milk yield by sucking the milk from the teats and spitting it out again. Mtukile explained this also: ' "The defender" watches over the cows. He takes milk in his mouth and squirts it on the ground; he does not swallow it in his dream. The next day the milk will be plentiful.' A village headman we knew enlarged further on the point: 'If a man is the son of a true village headman and goes to drink the milk of cows, he drinks from the teats, but his python vomits the milk and the next day the owner of the cow will find much milk and say: "He who came last night was the child of a village headman (*ulifumu*). He was good, he was not a witch, no, but a benefactor."[1] So they say. But if a real witch goes to bewitch the cows then the milk dries up altogether for a time. The owners of the cows will milk none for many days. He is a witch indeed.' Similarly, it is held that if witches can be compelled to vomit the human flesh they have eaten, 'to put back the meat', the patient will recover.

'Emptiness' and 'innocence' are associated in several contexts; and vomiting, spitting, and confession (*ukusuya*) are all taken as expressions of good will and repentance. *Ukusuva*, for example, means both 'to spit' and 'to forgive', the symbolism being interpreted in this way: 'If a father is angry with his son or daughter he may say some day, "I forgive you now" and spit on the ground: all the anger that is in him comes out like spit.' Blowing water from the mouth is an essential element in prayers to the ancestors, and the close association between them is apparent in the language: *ukupata* meaning to 'blow out water' and *ukwipata* (the reflexive form) meaning 'to pray',[2] with the implication of confessing whatever anger or grudge a man may have in his heart. Kasitile, the rainmaker, explained: 'This prayer with water is to confess *everything*. If I do not pray with water then something is left within.'

[1] For a similar concept among the Thonga cf. Junod, *The Life of a South African Tribe*, Vol. II, p. 513.

[2] The Zande symbolism is very similar: cf. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, 'Zande Theology' in *Sudan Notes and Records*, Vol. XIX (1936), pp. 11–14.

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In Nyakyusa society it is senior relatives who formally blow out water to express their good will, not suspected witches, as among the Azande. But the admission of anger by the supposed witch or justly shocked neighbours, and their wishes for the patient's good health, are anxiously sought (*vide infra*, p. 101), for such good wishes are thought to lead directly to his recovery.

The reverse of this emphasis on the value of confessing anger is the belief that the man who nurses a grudge in secret without ever admitting it is the most dangerous enemy, whether he be a senior relative muttering to the shades, or a neighbour using witchcraft, or a rival who has turned to sorcery. Mwambuputa, a conservative village headman without any school education, was very explicit on the point: 'The root of witchcraft is this—when two people have a quarrel in their hearts and do not let it out. Maybe I have a neighbour who hates me, but he never lets it out, he says nothing and we seem to be on friendly terms—those are the quarrels that are pregnant with witchcraft. But if he lets it out and tells me that I have wronged him in some way then the quarrel has no menace in it. It is when he lets nothing out and stays silent, though angry in his heart, that he comes in dreams to throttle me. That is the root of witchcraft.' Hence the insistence on one accused of witchcraft admitting guilt (*vide infra*, p. 111).

'The defenders' are powerful, but it is believed that witches are occasionally able in dreams to get past them, and throttle men against whom they have a grudge, or their cows. ' "The defenders" do not go out in dreams to fight the aggressors every night. A witch wanting to throttle a man comes night after night.' 'Nowadays it is much worse than it used to be, since the Europeans prevent us reporting them, and getting them stopped; "the defenders" work hard, but some nights they sleep without dreaming and the witches get past.'

Although the primary function of 'the defenders' is to see and drive off witches, nevertheless they are also thought to use their power to punish a wrong-doer. In doing so they are assisted by the witches, but, the Nyakyusa argue, the village headman who leads this night attack in dreams is no more breaking the law than he is when he fines a thief in court. In both cases he is exerting power to maintain the law. The Nyakyusa have a lively fear of shocking their neighbours, for it is held that the shocked astonish-

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ment of fellow villagers (*bikuwiga*) or their angry murmuring (*bikwibunenya*) will bring on wrong-doers 'the breath of men' (*embepo nya bandu*) causing them, or their children, or cattle, to fall ill, and this breath is the power of the pythons exerted by 'defenders' and witches acting together. We asked Mbukile whether 'the defenders' really came to choke a proud, quarrelsome person. 'Mother! They come. "The defenders" and the witches all call one another. They all go. "The defender" is not angry (at the attack), he says, "The man killed himself, he was a quarrelsome fellow!" ' And another friend explained: 'If a woman witch wishes to choke her husband, perhaps the first night "the defenders" will turn her back, but then she will plead with them and explain that her husband is a bad man and ill-treats her, then perhaps on the second night they will change their minds and come and help her. Yes, "the defenders" turn round sometimes and throttle people.'

'The breath of men' is thought to cause prolonged illness but not death, and should a death occur then a charge of witchcraft may be brought, and the suspects be required to drink the poison ordeal. 'We said, it is forbidden to kill a man. We others were afraid, although we had disliked the victim ourselves, we feared at some later time the witch would kill us.' All our informants accepted this view in theory, but in practice several cases in which the supposed victims died were cited as instances of 'the breath of men' (see table, pp. 206–8).

The effect of 'the breath of men' is spoken of as 'the curse' (*ibigwo*)[1] and its typical symptom is sterility, or a paralysis of the legs, which, it is thought, can only be cured when the sinner repents and reforms his behaviour, providing at the same time a feast of beer and meat for men of his village or, if it be against his father that he has sinned, of his father's village. At the feast it is essential that the men of the village should *admit their responsibility* for the sickness, and express hopes for the recovery of the patient. 'Formerly, they would pray and pray, they would let out all their anger, saying: "Certainly we were angry, it was us, but now it is all over." Then life would come back to the sick man and he recovered' (*cf.* Document, p. 240).

We see then, that a clear distinction is made by the Nyakyusa

[1] *Ibigwo* is not used in the Kukwe dialect, but is common usage in Selya, on the Lake-shore plain, and in Ngonde.

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754 626 between the legal and illegal use of power derived from pythons. 'The breath of men' is the general public opinion of a whole group—of an age-village or chiefdom—acting through the 'python power' of those of its members who happen to be possessed of it, led by one or more village headmen and directed against a single person. On the other hand, individuals proved to be witches are those believed to have acted by themselves, either against the public opinion of their age-village or chiefdom, or at any rate without securing its support. No pagan Nyakyusa doubts that witchcraft is bad, or that 'the breath of men' is used to bring legitimate punishment on evil-doers, but the classification of particular cases varies somewhat with the point of view of the individual. The victim of 'the breath of men' may speak indignantly about the attacks of 'the witches'.[1]

791 576 'The defenders' are regarded as pillars of society, and their exercise of python power as right and proper, yet no one readily admits to the possession of such power; it is a proud and boastful thing to do, and not good manners. Informants, when discussing it, rarely spoke as if they had direct knowledge of the power, usually prefacing their remarks with: 'It is said that', or 'I hear that'. This was true even of village headmen who are all believed to have the power. One such man, to whom a direct question was put, replied: 'I would not go so far as to boast of it myself, but other people in my village have it.' In villages of mature and old men, others besides the headmen are often known by name as having it; and besides this there is the general belief that in each such age-village 'some people', not specified, have it as well.

iv. Witchcraft, 'the breath of men' and morality

754 [626] Now the power of witchcraft and 'the breath of men' is held to operate primarily within one age-village, and it is denied that it can ever extend beyond the chiefdom. 'How could the people of another chiefdom "eat" a man?' said the village headman, Mwafula, 'It is those *here*'. The typical accusations are against neighbours and wives or co-wives and, nowadays, against fellow workers living in the same camp (cf. table, p. 198). The fact that it is within the village that witchcraft is thought to operate is

[1] cf. Godfrey Wilson, 'An African Morality' in *Africa*, Vol. IX (1936), pp. 87-8, for such a case.

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v. Procedure in witchcraft cases

Whenever someone is very ill there is anxious speculation among relatives and neighbours as to the cause of the illness. If witchcraft is suspected—and witchcraft is thought to be by far the commonest cause of sickness and death—people begin to whisper (*ukuheha*) that so and so is responsible. Even if the trouble is only a sudden fall in the milk supply there are whispers about witchcraft and the identity of the witch. Then the neighbours meet and complain (*ukwijaja*), or else the leader of the village-section, or even the headman of the village, takes the initiative and, summoning his people, admonishes them. The object of such complaint and exhortation is to warn off the witch. 'People speak very angrily, then the witches are ashamed within themselves, and stop their witchcraft, because they die of shame.' If the warning is effective—that is if the patient or the cows recover—the case will be dropped; but if the trouble continues then the village proceeds to the discovery of the witch. Mwaisumo explained: 'If sickness occurs, the village headman will call his people round him and say: "This village is not right, disease is killing the people, there must be someone who is bewitching them. We warn him to stop!" Then, if he does not stop he will call the people round him again and say: "Well, we must drive him away." Then they discuss their dreams with the headman, it is always by their dreams that they find out the witch, no other way.' A case was quoted in which the milk yield of a village had diminished and the villagers had 'called one another' to come together to complain. While they were complaining a 'defender' called out: 'I have seen the one who is throttling the cows; come together again to-morrow, and no one must stay behind.' When they met the next day one man called the names of each villager in turn, and 'the defender' responded to each with 'Yes', until 'Mwasalutaba' was called. Then he was silent. The name was called three times, and at the third time the whole company groaned. Mwasalutaba got up and, denying the accusation, appealed to the ordeal. He was found guilty by it and was driven from the village (cf. Document, pp. 241–3).

Mwakwelebeja, himself a commoner credited with the power of discovering witches in dreams, made a revealing comment on

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the discovery of witches. He said: 'The witches betray themselves. When we are sitting discussing the witches throttling people, we may notice one looking nervous and glancing sidelong at his friends, then we, who are innocent, know that he is the man.' Certainly a suspect is closely watched, and if he shows anxiety, or fails to join in the condemnation of witches and the expression of good will, this is brought up against him, as the following case shows.

'A certain man called Mwakagugu had a guest staying with him; a soldier on leave. Now this soldier was in the habit of calling in the neighbours to eat when his wife cooked a meal, and M. was always angry in his heart, wishing to eat alone with his guest. When the soldier invited in other people M. would refuse to join them. (The soldier was correct, according to Nyakyusa custom, in what he did. It is good to call in friends to eat.) On one occasion the soldier bought some beer and a crowd of men were drinking it, in another house, not M.'s; but they took a dry bamboo from M.'s place as firewood, to heat the water for the beer. Then M. was very angry indeed and asked: "What do you mean by taking my bamboo?" And his neighbours silently criticized him, thinking "Our friend here has not even bought this beer, and then he gets angry when we take his bamboo!" Another day when the soldier killed a bullock and gave a leg of the meat to some guests of his who were present his child fell ill, its ear swelled up and burst, and it screamed with pain. Later, a neighbour's wife cooked some porridge for her husband without any relish so when she brought the porridge to where the men were sitting, the soldier called to his own wife to bring a chicken she had cooked, as relish, and he offered it to the other men, eating none himself. Again, on yet another occasion, when his wife brought him his porridge she called M. to join him; but M. laughed and said: "Let them (the soldier and his other friends), eat it by themselves." This was the woman's story. And then straight away they were startled by the child screaming and refusing to lie down.

'So then all the neighbours gathered together and gave expression to their anger (*ukwijaja*), asking themselves the cause of the sickness, and why it was that it always became apparent when they were eating. "If the man in question" they said, naming no one, "does it again, we will expel him from the country!" As

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754 efficacy neither depends upon nor affects the user's anatomy.
757 The creation and control of wild animals, for example, is thought
789 to turn on knowing the right medicines, not on any innate power, and is not therefore classed as witchcraft.

• 791 The Nyakyusa hold that just as 'python power' may be put to
754 good or evil use, so also medicines may be employed legally or illegally. Particular techniques are not in themselves either good
789 or bad; their morality turns on the purpose which they serve. Thus our friend and neighbour, Mwakionde, who was believed to have created four lions, which were roaming the neighbourhood, by placing certain bundles of twigs in the long grass, was regarded as a benefactor; for the lions had attacked neither men nor cattle, and besides adding dignity (*ubusisya*) to the country were killing the wild pig, which had been destroying the gardens. But a certain X— was driven out of Mwaijande's country because he was alleged to have created leopards which had killed children and cows. 'In 1926 X— was notorious for making leopards. It was said that he got a medicine from Misuku to make them. His neighbours feared to quarrel with him for in that year leopards infested the whole of Selya, especially the country of Mwaijande. It was said that if one quarrelled with this man one's child would be killed by leopards the following day. He was notorious. Once he quarrelled with a neighbour, saying: "Your cattle are eating my food." Then the following day the child of that man was taken by a leopard. The chief drove X— out. When they questioned him he denied having familiars ("animals") but the chief said: "Move from my country, for your animals are destroying this country." He said: "Chief, give me the ordeal." The chief refused, saying: "No! get out of my country." So he moved. Now he is back in the country of Mwaijande. He returned to the place from which he had moved.'[1]

789 Not all medicines believed to cause sickness and death are illegal; there are many retaliatory medicines which are believed only to harm the evil-doer, e.g. the thief, the adulterer, or the eater of stolen food; and the use of these 'medicines of ownership' (*ifilembeko*) is considered quite legitimate. A man gives his wives medicines to drink (without their knowledge) and then any lover who may sleep with them will, it is said, contract disease in

[1] In another context this man was spoken of as a witch (*umdosi*), cf. Document, p. 252.

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success of the ritual, but who do not play any specially defined part. As we have seen, all who are reckoned kinsmen and all fellow villagers *must* attend a funeral, and a large crowd enhances the status of the kinsmen of the deceased. At a puberty and marriage ritual the 'congregation' is much smaller but is nevertheless important, as is shown by the complaint of the girl marrying a Christian that if she were not initiated she would not be famed. At other rituals all who attend are actors.

The officiants (*abanyago*) for death, puberty and marriage, and birth rituals are almost always elderly women who, by their own choice, have learnt the medicines and observances from some older *unyago* by acting as her assistant. We came across only one man who acted as *unyago* in death and puberty rituals, though at the rituals of spearing, binding with ropes, and protection against sorcery men are more common than women. Often all the elderly women are referred to as '*abanyago*' for 'they help the *unyago*', but the one who has been called upon to provide the medicines and organize the proceedings, and who is paid for her trouble, is clearly recognized. Sometimes she is a kinswoman of the 'owner' of the ritual—if a member of the lineage knows the medicines she will carry out the rituals for all her kin, as did Syungu, wife of Chief Porokoto's half-brother—but she is not necessarily a relative. It is knowledge, not kinship connections, that qualify her. She is the final arbitrator on procedure, and is insistent on exact observance of the details. Because knowledge of medicines is so important Nyakyusa often refer to the officiant at a ritual as *unganga*, a doctor, but *unyago* is the more precise word since *unganga* has other applications.

On the occasion of prayer in sickness, and in the ritual of reconciliation, no specialist *unyago* is necessary. The senior kinsman of a lineage prays to his shades direct, and a father and his neighbours receive and bless an erring son without the mediation of any priest; but the doctor called in to treat a sick man may press the kinsmen to confess their anger and bless one another (as Mwakionde did in the case quoted) and come very close to organizing a ritual of reconciliation.

At a marriage ritual there is a 'go-between' (*umfusya*) representing the bride's father and one representing the groom, and, besides their legal function as witnesses to the passage of cattle, they help the officiant to organize the ritual, and are specifically responsible for conveying invitations to the feasts. The wife of the groom's 'go-

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My bull was wounded. When I tried to kill it, it troubled me, it did not die. I took a banana sapling and chewed it and prayed to my fathers, saying: 'This bull has been wounded because it was destroying people's crops. I am killing it because the people are angry with me and they might spear me in the night if I don't kill it.' My son struck it the third time, then it bellowed and I said: 'Yes, they have heard my prayer,' and it fell down and died. The shades were preventing it dying because they liked it to be alive. The whole country liked this bull because of its beautiful bellowing.

The shades are very real to an old man like Mwakwelebeja:

We live with the shades, constantly the fathers come to us, and also a wife who has died. The shades rise and come to us. In the morning I wake up and tell my wife the shades came to me, I slept with them, and with the wife who has died.

QUESTION: Why do they come?

MWAKWELEBEJA: You just dream. Sometimes they speak something, and in the morning I tell my wife they said so-and-so. Sometimes they bring food. If a sick man dreams that he eats their food he will die. If he dreams that he visits them and they drive him away he will recover. Sometimes I dream of my father or of my mother, sometimes of the villagers, So-and-so, and So-and-so. Yes, we fear to dream of the shades, even if we don't eat food. We fear that if they come often we will follow them.

And even to young men like Kititu they seem near:

Yes, the shades come to us in dreams at night. Perhaps I dream of my father who has died, he appears, he gives me a cow, I wonder, it seems that I have gained that cow. I rejoice and am glad. This is all in a dream. Perhaps my mother has died and I dream of her. She gives me food as it were on this table. I eat, I drink beer with her. Our grandfathers used to dream of war. When the Ngoni were in the country they would dream that they and the shades, the fathers who had died, were fighting with the Ngoni; in the dream they would spear them and the blood would appear. All men dream, but those whose dreams come true we call *abasololi*—prophets. These men sometimes dream of pubic matters, as well as private, they go to Kasitile [the priest] and say: 'Hunger is coming, carry out the ritual in the sacred grove.' Then they take a cow, bananas, and milk to the sacred grove as Kasitile says. Then there are those who fall into a fit and the friends of such a man goto Kasitile and tell what he said.

Perhaps I dream of my father or grandfather, and he comes and gives me food. I know him by his appearance in the dream. Perhaps my grandfather died while I was still a child, but I know him by his dress

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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•791 Now begin the duties of the person who is called the rainmaker. In the Misuku Hills there is a rain forest, the trees of which drop moisture. Word is sent to the local chief that the spirits have accepted the prayers of Chungu; and a quantity of rain-tree twigs is sent and delivered to the rainmaker. This official, known as the *unsusi*, goes to the lake by night to fetch water, which is placed in a pot along with the twigs, and some small smooth black or white stones, the pot being now covered with banana leaves, and placed near a small bush "where God stores the rain." The rainmaker now goes into his house, where he prays, lying on his face; a position which he retains until rain has actually fallen. Chungu also continues in prayer.

The rainmaker is a quite inferior official. In the past he might be a slave, or any other unimportant person appointed for the duty. His function seems to be that of a "conductor," through whose person, or acts, or abstinence from action, the continuance of the rain granted at the prayer of the chief is assured. He must not cut his hair during the rainy season, for the heavens would dry up if he did. He must not wash in water, for that would bring on a flood; in June he may begin cautiously to wash himself, and later he may indulge in the luxury of a full bath, and at the same time he may cut, but not shave, his hair. He must not be angry or scold during the rains, lest he bring on a lightning storm with fatal effects to some one. Further, during all those months he may not roast maize or ground-nuts, the leaping of which

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while being rôasted is like the play of lightning, and would bring on a fatal stroke from the sky.

In 1912 "God's rain" fell as usual in December; but in January came drought which continued into February. Urgent messages were sent to Chungu, who replied that he was helpless, as the *mulima* was lost. After diligent inquiry, it was found to be in possession of Mwandosya, who refused to act, because in the distribution of the cattle of a deceased relative another chief, Kasikula, had taken more than his share. Kasikula was ordered by Chungu to restore the balance, but he refused, and only agreed when the men present took up clubs to thrash him into obedience. Prayer was then offered in the usual way, and Mwandosya announced that God had commanded him to forgive the offender. "Rain," he said, "will come at once. You Karonga, will be overtaken by it before you can reach home." And so it fell out. Rain came in torrents, preceded by a great storm which overthrew a number of trees in a neighbouring estate, and greatly injured the fine avenue leading to the Mission House.

Now for some days there had been much thunder, and dark clouds covered the sky; anyone could tell that the rain was near. But for the Konde that was just the point. The rain was there, and it was quite obviously being withheld. Why else did it not fall? And it did fall when the wrong was righted, and the prayers offered. Who but a white man could doubt the relation of cause and effect?

One or two local variations are worth noting. At Karonga an offering of black cloth is made along with

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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CHAPTER XVII

The Foretellers

AMONG primitive peoples all over the world, the power of certain individuals to foretell events, to anticipate the future, is profoundly believed in. Western science has so organized life that such methods of meeting the future are needless and foolish. Smallpox is met at a distance, as are many other diseases, by quarantine regulations, by isolation, by skilful treatment when it comes. Hunger is warded off by foresight, by careful distribution, by skilful farming. The terror of heavenly bodies visiting our skies is neutralized by the calculations of astronomers published long beforehand.

The Konde have their own way of meeting these emergencies. Smallpox is warded off in dreams by the prophets. Hunger, in not a few cases, is anticipated by prophetic warning that rain will not fall at the usual time, and therefore food stocks must be carefully guarded. Eclipses, and even earthquakes, are foretold, not by the scientific methods of the West, but by the foretellers, whose information is as confidently trusted by the Konde, as are the calculations of science in more advanced lands.

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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781 It cannot be asserted that Konde prophecy contains much that is dramatic. It is true that those who were doomed to die in battle were known beforehand to the chief and one or two others; but such dramatic events as the bloody spectre foretelling death at Ticonderoga, at the time an unknown place; or the visions of Highland seers in Scotland; or the no less dramatic forecasts of some Hindu priests, are not to be found here. Konde prophecy, if one may give it that name, was more of an everyday affair, not so much concerned with the fate of individuals, as with the general welfare.

791 There are two classes of foretellers. First are the persons already referred to as *abakunguluka*. Their initiation into office has already been described, and it is enough to say that the medicines taken, and the ceremonies undergone, at the time of their installation as subordinate chiefs, gives them power to see in dreams all danger to the chief or the community. The verb *kukunguluka* means to go, or fall, down; to sink deep; and the *unkunguluka* is the man who goes down, in dreams, to the underworld, to obtain there the word that he is to deliver to the chief. *Kusololoka*, with its noun *unsololi*, has the same meaning.

The primary duty of these men was to guard the person of the chief from unseen dangers. Anything that threatened was seen in dreams, and measures taken to ward it off. Witchcraft, illness, poison, danger from animals, from falling trees, were thus foreseen. But in order effectively to protect him, they must know where he is, and what he is doing at

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a given time. The young chief, Reuben, the account of whose installation is given in the chapter on the chieftainship, told me that on his return home his prophets would tell him that he had been talking with me, and would demand an account of all that passed between us. These men, it may be here noted, would not give me any information about themselves or their methods; that was *mwiko* (forbidden); but they had no objection at all to the chief telling me all I wished to know. Practically all that is here said about them, therefore, is derived from various chiefs, and whatever is not so derived is common knowledge, which anyone may pick up.

When the message came to a prophet, he went to tell his fellow-prophets, and all together went to the chief, to whom all such dreams must be related, before publication to the common people, and the steps decided upon which are to be taken to ward off whatever danger threatens. War was seen, down to its smallest details. The dreamer was actually, in dreams, present at the fight, and saw both the killed and the wounded. The names were given to the chief, who, when he marched out with his forces, left behind any of those whom he wished to save. The people very confidently affirm that just the persons named, and no others, were killed. The incredulity of the white man is regarded as an entirely uncalled for slight upon upright men discharging a duty about which, to the Konde, there is no mystery at all.

The German defeat at Karonga in September, 1914, was very clearly foretold by Njuli and Mwandisi,

3: Mackenzie M-5 (ca. 1925) 1925
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791 781 both still living near the lake shore; but the Germans knew nothing of the prophecy. The effect of it, however, was that no local carriers could be recruited, and most of the carriers employed were found among the Basango to the north. Next, it was asserted that the Germans would evacuate Neu Langenburg without fighting, which is what actually happened; and, finally, about the same time, it was declared that the "first-comers" would become lords of the country. These first-comers were Mr. Moir of Glasgow and his companions, who hunted elephant north of the Songwe River in the early eighties. Dr. Laws of Livingstonia visited the north end of the lake much earlier, but that visit did not make the same impression as the more prolonged stay of Mr. Moir and his fellow-hunters.

791 753 754 Smallpox is the most dreaded scourge in the district. It is believed to come from the south, pass through the land, and finally to disappear among the Basango to the north, to whom the Konde consigned, with much gusto, all the evils that they were threatened or afflicted with. Its coming was foretold by the prophets, who declared that it was an act of God in punishment of wickedness. But smallpox was sometimes brought by the sorcerers. These enemies of society were caught in the act—in dreams—by the prophets, who also, in dreams, went out to meet and repel them. If the evil-doers were caught and beaten, their bodies next day would betray them, for the dream-fight is a stern reality, and the body bears the marks of battle. If the prophets succeeded in

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
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driving out all the sorcerers, no one would die of smallpox, but one remaining sorcerer could work unlimited mischief so long as he remained undiscovered.

In a community which practises "subsistence agriculture," it is important to know beforehand when the rains will be late, and it is the duty of the prophets to let the chief know, and through him the people, when this will happen. In such a contingency, the chief issues instructions, varying in minuteness, regulating the kinds of food which are to be used, and warning against greed. Punishment used to follow disregard of the prohibition, but the chiefs, although they still issue orders as before, do not now venture to punish offenders, or at any rate they punish none who would be likely to report them to the Administration.

Famine, however, was not always the result of drought. It was often, in the past, the result of war. When a powerful enemy approached, the people left the villages and took refuge in the bush, sometimes for long periods, leaving all that they could not carry to fall into the hands of the invader. The last occasion on which such a famine was foretold was when the Angoni passed through the land seeking a habitation. The people fled before them, and a famine resulted which is still traditionally remembered. With such a powerful enemy approaching, the prophets had an easy task in foreseeing famine.

The death of chiefs is also foretold. The prophets see in dreams the house of a chief being built in the

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spear, and that the land would be filled with wonders of which no man had ever heard.

How far the original form of these prophecies has been modified by experience, I do not undertake to say. All who pretend to knowledge of the subject vigorously deny any modification. Whether the actual performances of the white man have satisfied the expectations aroused by the prophecies, is a question susceptible of more than one answer. The great mass of the people would certainly not rejoice at the departure of the Europeans; nevertheless there are some who would be glad to see the last of them. Long before the Great War, prophecies were freely circulating among the people, that the Germans would go away, and be succeeded by white men of another land. Just now similar prophecies are being made about the British, who are to be succeeded by another white race as yet unknown. The fact, which is well known to many people, that some "doctors" are seeking for a medicine which will cause the white man to disappear, is significant.

There is a tradition that a series of forecasts was made long ago: the Great War, the influenza which followed it, the great earthquake of 1919, and finally a great darkness which is still to come.

The progress of Christianity has not destroyed the faith, especially of the heathen, in the local prophets; and it is not improbable that Christians still retain a conviction that these men were not wholly without Divine guidance. The chief Swebe, when I asked him whether in all cases smallpox foretold had actually

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
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791 come, answered with an emphatic affirmative, and with an intonation which clearly meant, "Why should it be doubted?" The spirit form a link between men and God, and there is, in the native mind, no reason at all to doubt that God can make the future known to certain individuals when it is His will to do so. The darkness of mind, so often attributed to the heathen, is not absolute, and they themselves, while readily acknowledging the superiority of Christianity, do not admit that they were wholly without guidance in the past.

The second class of foretellers are the *shalomwa maingo*, a phrase which may be roughly translated as spirit-possessed persons, trance-seers, inspired persons. They foretell the future by means of an indwelling spirit, but the occupation is always temporary. The possessed person runs about calling, "Listen, listen, listen." His friends seek to restore him by pouring water on his head, but if he resists they let him alone, believing that he has a message. He breaks away, followed by his friends, who carefully note all he says. One man known to me climbed, in that condition, a mountain of two thousand feet, and on recovering consciousness was in an exhausted condition, though he showed no signs of exhaustion while in the trance.

791 These seers, if we may use a short name for them,
189 announce very much the same things as the prophets, but they seem to have made the forecasting of animal visitations their special province. In 1910 a woman called Nakunjere declared that a lion would come

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and kill many people. The chief, Mwenemusuku, protected his land in the manner described in the chapter on "The Powers of Evil," and none of his people were killed, though the total killed by a lion in that year in neighbouring districts was very large. A letter in my possession puts the number at forty, while others say fifty. Where the chief protected his land in the traditional way, the people were safe; where this was not done, the toll of human lives was great.

In 1912 the same woman predicted that, for the sins of the people, a spotted hyena would kill many. Again the chief protected his land, and again no one was killed; while in a neighbouring and unprotected land, the death-roll was considerable. In the same year leopards were predicted in the Nserya district. The chief was urged to sacrifice an ox, but refused. Six people were killed, and a number of mauled men and women were treated by Dr. Brown at the Mission at Itete.

To the Konde, as I have already said, there is no difficulty in connecting prediction and fulfilment. The inspiration of the foretellers is not doubted; the animals came as foretold; why should reasonable men refuse to acknowledge a relation between the two events? At any rate it may be presumed that the native will go on seeing a connection, while the white man will fall back upon the ever-ready doctrine of coincidence, and refuse upon any terms to acknowledge any other relation.

There is, however, spirit possession of another kind,

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787 911 taking advantage of the credulity of the masses—can be entertained only by those who have acquired no insight into the native mind and its working. It is impossible to maintain that a system, as wide as a continent, and as persistent as the centuries, should be the outcome of an age-long conspiracy to cheat. The human mind does not work in that way. The system is involved in the world-view; it is woven into the mind-texture of the people, and the honesty of the "practitioners" is, in many cases, as indubitable as the faith of the people.

•791 The prayer for rain, for instance, is offered with a simple sincerity, as honest as any petition ever offered in a Christian church. I am not asserting that the prayer brings the rain; nor yet that it does not. Nor do I suppose that the diviner is in touch with fact, when he uses what he considers to be means of getting into communication with the spirits. I am arguing only for the honesty, in a great majority of cases, of the men who do these things. They are men with a conviction.

The diviner usually hands on his knowledge and his office to one of his own family; but an outsider may learn his secrets by paying an ox or a cow. I am not aware that there is any serious attempt to guard the secrets of the profession, though the various drugs used are not made known except to those who are willing to pay the fee. The only form of initiation is [304] the incising of medicines into the arms or wrists of the initiate, and this incision may be renewed should occasion require it.

to the diviner to find out the cause of the discoloration, and would of necessity make reparation. 787

III. A few years ago a policeman had his goods stolen at Mwaya. Instead of reporting to the proper quarters, he went to a diviner, who sprinkled the policeman's house with medicine, which he publicly declared would kill the thief, and in a short time the goods were brought to the chief of the district. The deception in this case is too obvious to call for comment.

Inquiries regarding hunting and fishing, and every other kind of question, are conducted in ways similar to those already given. Employment with a white man is evidently still a matter for careful consideration, and it is entirely possible that the diviner prevents many a man from going to work who would otherwise be glad to go. "Shall I find work?" "Shall I find peace?" "Shall I get good wages?" The second question is much the most important, and means, "Shall I be employed by a white man who is not a perpetual scold?" the kind of European whom the native hates and fears more than anything else.

The fee paid to the diviner varied from about a halfpenny to an ox or a cow. [TR]

While there is undoubtedly deliberate cheating and charlatanry, these should be regarded, not as the essence of the system, but its excrescence. In many cases, if not in all, the diviner has subconsciously decided what answer shall be given; in the region of the subconscious his mind is made up, and, there being no opposing idea, the "mental process issues in

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he settles many legal disputes between his neighbours. The village is, both for men and women, the chief field of friendship, conversation and mutual hospitality; and its members recognize greater obligations towards one another than they do towards those outside. Before the coming of the Europeans the age-village was also a military unit, led by its own great commander, in the constant fights between chiefdoms.

In most villages there are several herds of cattle which feed separately. The herd boys, as we have seen, thus form separate groups within the village, as also do their fathers; the boys are related in the common activity of herding, the men, owners of the herd, by their joint interest in it and their common fear of witchcraft.

In the relationships of villagers the belief in witchcraft is a constantly recurring factor. It is believed that certain people, both men and women, have the power of harming their neighbours and their neighbours' cattle without taking any overt action whatever, without reciting any spells or performing any magical ritual at all.

Their influence, which is exercised at night in dreams, is only fully visible to those who are themselves endowed with this power; and so it is commonly attributed both sickness in men and the failure of cows to give milk. To this belief the elements of actual ill will and quarrelling, of actual sickness and the failure of cows to give milk and of actual dream experiences are combined in a significant whole. Witches are of two kinds, they say, those who use their power rightly (*uwe mwiye*) and those who use it wrongly (*uwi'ai*). The first kind are said generally to spend their dreams in trying to prevent the others from harming those whom they love. The good witches are the "defenders of the village" ... [illegible] each village the great commander is believed to be the first among them. In each group of men whose cows are herded together there is, again, commonly one man who has the reputation of defender of the herd, who is believed to protect the cows from the witchcraft of disgruntled individuals whether members of the small group or not. But if, at any time, a single person earns a general unpopularity in the village, whether by his pride, his meanness or by wrongdoing, then it is believed that the defenders themselves lead the spiritual attack against him, and he falls sick. Such a blast of unpopularity acting through the power of witchcraft is called the "breath of men" (*umbiyo gwa nondo*); and the belief in its efficacy is one of the chief sanctions of the accepted social order of Nyakyusa life.[1]

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[1] Cf. Godfrey Wilson "An African Morality" *Africa* Jan. 1936.

9:Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1959
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may nullify any ritual, but often it is not strong enough to overcome the fissiparous tendencies of the lineage. In theory a celebration at the grove of a senior should precede that at the grove of a junior and sacrifices at Lubaga would be followed by sacrifices at the groves of the 'sons of Lwembe' in order of seniority, but this does not happen in practice nowadays and we doubt whether it ever did, since a hierarchy was not organized and maintained by a central authority as in Ngonde. In 1935 a celebration at the grove of Mwaijonga (B1) preceded one at the grove of his great-grandfather Mwakisambwe (p1) by a month, as we shall see.

Sacrifices are made when a drought or flood occurs, or a plague of locusts, or an epidemic among men or cattle; when fishing is poor in the chiefdoms of the plain, or war is imminent. They occur most often during the 'winter' in the hills, when a malaria-ridden people feel the chill of damp mists and cool south winds, and in October, just before the break of the rains, when the country is parched; but they are not confined to these periods. In theory the village headmen and the priests who 'watch over the country' foresee coming misfortune in dreams, and avert it by making the appropriate sacrifices. And they are helped by ordinary people who are dreaming repeatedly or falling into a trance or fit, and prophesying evil and jabbering of 'a black cow, a black cow' or some other appurtenance of sacrifice. But in practice the prophecies generally occur when there is hunger or plague in the land, or an omen (such as a python or a ground hornbill behaving oddly) has been seen.

The dreamers are *akulungulula*, and, as these names indicate, they are believed to have descended into the land of the *dimba*. *Ukumbila*[1] means to go down into something, like the roots of a tree into the earth, and *ukulungula* originally referred to plucking a banana flower which (as was shown in *Rituals of Kinship*) is a symbol for a corpse and is buried; so the *akulungulula* are those who have been buried in the earth. '*Akulungulula* go to the land of the *dimba* and return. . . . *An ankungulula* plucks up the "Horned gourd" (*ilinjobi*) in his own courtyard and goes beneath and sees.' . . . He goes down into the earth beneath and takes the chief to the land of the *dimba* when he dies, and he also sees the witches. . . .[2] More rarely, the *amankili* or *ankungulula* is

[1] *Ukumbila*—a Ngonde pronunciation, the implication being that the infant's head is in the fontanel, but children born in this way are not necessarily prophets.

[2] cf. Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 25 ff.

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said just to become aware of future events without any dream. *Abalangulaka* are distinguished from those who suffer from fits or fall into trances (*abalowe' amalege*), but a woman in a trance may also prophesy and induce the chief and priests to celebrate a ritual, for it is thought that she too is in communication with the shades. Men say 'The shade has entered her' or 'Kyala catches hold of her that she may speak of the matter'. This type of prophecy is something new among the Nyakyusa. Mwandisi (107) told us that 'it did not exist in BuKinga whence we came', but had been introduced from the south, through Ngonde, and it is mainly confined to women, whereas the *abalangulaka* are men.

There are many tales of famous prophecies. Nsamba (90) claimed that his father (63) foretold that 'there will come a white thing on the Lake, and it will land on the shore. That will be the man who will make peace', and Mwakalinga (140) who died fighting the Germans is said to have foretold his own death.[1]

Dreams and revelations of the possessed concerning public matters are reported to the local village headman and referred to the other headmen and priests, and a prophecy is accepted as valid only after formal discussion. As we shall see, Kasitile was sceptical about the revelations of one man who was repeatedly 'possessed', perhaps because he threatened to become a rival in interpreting public misfortune. If there is doubt, suspicions are confirmed or problems elucidated, by divination.

When they judged a sacrifice necessary the village headman and priests went to their chief saying, 'We do not sleep', and it was his obligation to secure an animal for sacrifice. He might provide it out of his own herd, but very often the duty of 'finding' sacrificial cattle was delegated to a junior line—the ruling chief gave cattle to a younger brother charging him and his heirs with the function of providing sacrificial cattle when necessary. Today all the chiefs are reluctant to expend cattle on rituals whose validity is questioned, and there is often friction between the senior and junior lines over who should 'find' the cow or bull required. Their reluctance is illustrated by the following passage from Godfrey Wilson's diary:

Mwaipa (on the lake shore): 22/11/34
It is still stormy; there has been wind and heavy rain for four days. People are saying: 'We are hungry. It is very bad. We need light rain

[1] According to Mr. Hankin's informants the Swahow eclipse was foretold a year before it occurred. *Tanganyika Notes and Records*, 40 (1955), p. 61.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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the order to clear out the ashes; messages were sent to the great chiefs and the senior territorial nobles of the plain, and they told their juniors. A sacrifice was made in one of the sacred groves of the Kyungus and all fires in the whole Ngonde plain were put out. And then

> all the chiefs from every country near Mbande and the nobles and all the village headmen and all the ordinary men and women, too, went to Kyimbwe where we threw away the sickness of all the country.

At Kyimbwe, which is the crossroads in the bush, they threw away the ashes of their old fires, and some of the pots and baskets in which food is served; while those few people who could not get to Kyimbwe threw them away from their own houses on the same day as the others. At Kyimbwe new fire was made with a fire-drill by the nobles of Ngonde who

> ran with it without looking back and the people danced alongside them and speared one another! . . . They said, 'Let us dance, let us fight that the homesteads may be peaceful'. . . . 'Let us throw out the ashes that death may leave the homesteads and they be at peace.' It is to bring out war from within (*ulaasepa*).

The symbolism is the same as in the rituals of kinship when kinsmen gather to admit their quarrels and press one another to speak out, so that they may cleanse themselves of anger.

The new fire was distributed to the whole plain in order. Great chiefs and senior nobles took it first and passed it to their juniors, chiefs passed to village headmen, and in each group the common people got it from their own ruling noble or their own village headman.

In July 1937, while we were visiting Ngonde, there was a plague of rats[1] which threatened the food supply, and Bungulu, the wife of a chief and well known as a prophetess, went into a trance and revealed that the rats were caused by the anger of the previous Kyungu and could be got rid of only by a ritual 'throwing out the rubbish' and sacrifice. Her husband reported the matter to Mulwa, the premier noble of Ngonde, to whom the present Kyungu, Peter—at one time a Church member—had long since handed over all responsibility for communal rituals. Mulwa called four of the leading chiefs who were pagan and a number of

[1] Nothing new in Ngonde. Lord (then Captain) Lugard suffered from them in 1888: F. D. Lugard, *The Rise of our East African Empire* (1893), vol. i, p. 103. In 1937 the country swarmed with rats: in our own camp we killed 30 to 100 each night.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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CHAPTER VIII

RAIN-MAKING AND 'SPRINKLING THE HOMESTEADS'

789 Two activities which are closely linked with sacrifice at the groves of chiefs, but which are distinguished from them because they consist in the manipulation of medicines, rather than prayers and oblations, are 'rain-making' and 'sprinkling the homesteads' to ensure fertility of the soil.

(*a*) RAIN MAGIC

791 Rain-makers (*abapelafula*) are men who use perforated instruments called 'rain' (*ifula*) to produce rain or sunshine. The heroes were believed to create rain by the virtue in their own bodies, but the Kyungu also had a much prized instrument of iron, perforated [778] 'like a mouth organ', and several of the chiefs had perforated stones which were used to 'make rain'. In most cases the care of them was delegated to a junior kinsman, a commoner, or (in Ngonde) even a slave, but often the office became hereditary and rain-makers were men of considerable power. Such was Kasitile whose grandfather (44), a younger brother of the chief Mwamukinga (43), had been entrusted with his rain stones. The Kyungu was thought to control the rain in the whole of the Ngonde plain, the Lwembe in an area less clearly defined, but which included Selya, BuKinga, and parts of the Nyakyusa plain, Kyala in the eastern portion of the Nyakyusa plain, and parts of BuKinga and BuKisi. Chiefs were credited with making local rain, in their own [illegible]

789 778 The technique of 'making' rain was to seal the holes in the perforated instruments with ointment and immerse them in water.

> The rain instrument that helped Kyungu was called Mulima. Its holes were its eyes. If they were empty it would be empty in the sky above also, there would be no clouds; if some were full then there would be a few clouds, if all were full then there would be many clouds and rain. If it were raining and he put it in a tree so that its eyes looked up, then the sun would shine. . . . If he opened its eyes that they might be empty and put it in a tree so that it looked up then the clouds dried up above, the sky also became empty.

[p. 114]

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789 778 them first, then his grandfather, and father. Others told us that rain stones always came from Kisi country, a very wet strip of land on the north-east shore of the Lake where the clouds always seem to gather when one looks south from the Nyakyusa valley and plain, and a piece of perforated wood used in Ngonde for making rain came from the hills of Misuku, also a very wet country. Kasitile's stones were of two types, but no direct association of male and female was made. However, the Kukwe spoke of a 'mother' stone having young. 'The rain-maker puts back the stone in the potsherd without water (after rain has come) and going later he finds that it has got young, perhaps seven, with the mother there are eight.'

791 [784] [262] The rain-makers are subject to certain taboos: during the dry season they may not wash lest they drive away the rain nor do they shave for 'they compare hair and clouds saying, "Let it be black", they compare a bald pate with sunshine.' And the rain-maker may not eat roasted maize 'for as the maize crackles in the potsherd when it is roasted, so the thunder will crackle in the sky'. He may not eat green maize (which is reaped during the rains) until the dry weather begins 'because he creates rain, which means he creates all the food which grows with the rain'. If he begins eating too soon he may stop the growth. And when the rain-maker is manipulating his instruments a sex taboo is observed. [834] 'When I am making rain,' said Kasitile, 'I do not sleep with my wives for two days, it's taboo. How would Kyala help us if I did?'

[643] In theory the rain-maker always works under the direction of the political authority—the Kyungu or a chief—but he is also thought to wreak vengeance on those who anger him. Kasitile was critical of his colleague in the hills above Isumba: 'He never makes a nice gentle rain, it always destroys food. . . . He is always demanding things from men, and if they refuse, he brings the rain to destroy things. . . . There is a very strong wind and heavy rain which takes roofs off homes.' But when Kasitile himself was [964] [687] angry, because his son was taken as a tax defaulter to work on the roads, the weather grew bad.

789 People say I am angry, that this rain is because they came and beat me because of tax. This time the tax collectors came to my place and beat me and when I thought, 'It is not the custom with our forefathers for the tax collectors to come at all to men like me', I grew angry and prayed. . . . When I was in MaNgonde the country suffered from hunger, all their children were in trouble. . . . Then I came up, and

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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drought, as in illness, a number of possible causes are discussed, and if one possible cause is dealt with and yet the drought persists, another will be put forward. A shrewd priest or doctor can turn this to account and find many reasons for the failure of his ritual, as the following case shows.

In the wet Nyakyusa valley rain-makers are not concerned only with drought, but also with flood, and, in the years 1935-8, with the rise in the level of the Lake which inundated many gardens.[1] On the Nyakyusa plain the rise was attributed to the action of a Kisi doctor, Mwatabi, who had first boasted that he could bring up the Lake and then been commissioned by the chief, Mwakalukwa (141), to do so, 'because there was much grass by the Lake and many mosquitoes, and it was dirty there'. He was told to 'take the Lake up a bit, but not too far' and given a sheep. Then, the following season, in April (a month of torrential rain), Mwakalukwa's son Mwakisisile (170, for Mwakalukwa himself had died) gave him a little bull saying,

Send the Lake back, it has come too far. Then the doctor went home thinking to himself, 'Why does he give me such a little bull?' and he met a headman of the neighbouring chief, Mwakabululu (138), and said, 'Why should I send the Lake back, Mwakisisile has given me a bull only; had he given me a cow, I'd have done so, but now I am angry.' Then Mwakabululu heard and sent a message to say he would provide a cow, since Mwakalukwa was dead. But the doctor refused: 'No, Mwakalukwa (the son, 170) is still alive, he must give it.' The following September, before the usual end of the dry season, there was rain on the plain. It is the Kisi's rain. Mwakisisile (170) refused to give him anything, he said he was a liar, but the commoners collected 30s. and a goat, and the Kisi performed a ritual just recently, and said: 'The Lake will go back, but my strength will bring the rain; it will rain during the dry season this month.' We laughed very much in Tukuyu to hear such a prophecy, but it is raining!

The following year—after the Lake had risen again—another reason was given: It was said that a rain-maker at Bojo in Kisi country had died, and just before he died he had thrown a rain stone into the Lake.

(b) MAGIC OF FERTILITY

We did not learn very much about 'sprinkling the homesteads';

[1] There is a periodic rise and fall in the level of the Lake. In 1937 the Lake evidently was reclaiming its own, and was lapping the outer wall of the District Commissioner's house at Kyimbila.

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793 NDEMBWE
755 NSOKI
[551] NSEKA
[791] A SANGU
} Diviners consulted by Kasitile

NDEKA a kinsman of Kasitile

It will be remembered that, in accordance with the custom of 793 delegating ritual functions to a junior line, Kasitile's grand- 755 father (44) had been appointed rain-maker and priest responsible for receiving the Kinga when they came to sacrifice at Lubaga. Kasitile thus held an important public office. He was living on the plain (where he had inherited the estate of his father's younger brother) where his own elder brother (85) died and he came up into Selya to bury him and succeed to his position. But he failed to notify the Kinga priests of his brother's death and they were [787] very angry, and told him he would die if he stayed in the homestead, so he fled back to the plain. There he fell ill, and he was carried back to Selya to be treated by the visiting Kinga priests, who told him he was sick 'because he went to the plain in a hurry and they had not given him medicine'. The idea here is that the heir to a chief or priest must cultivate the power that was in his [778] father's body by drinking medicines: Kasitile was 'losing the *ifugila* of his father by not drinking medicines'. Now *ifugila* implies *both* the medicines of chieftainship and the power which they create in the body of a man.

So Kasitile was treated and we quote his own account of what happened:

> The Kinga came to cook medicine by the tree where I pray—it is [illegible] for Jane [his senior wife] and me in beer . . . and we drank together . . . [783] and they boiled medicines in a pot and told us both to wash with the infusion every day for two months. I found a goat and called the priests Ngulyo, Njobukasa, and Kisegeta and . . . they and the Kinga priests ate the meat together, and they told me to stay for two months and return to the plain again, and so I did. Then the Kinga sent for me to come back and I've come up to live. I found a cow, and called the priests and killed it at the sacred grove, Kinyangwa, and all the people ate the meat. Then the Kinga told me to move to my father's old homestead, and I did so this very year.

Before we arrived, therefore, Kasitile had been in conflict with [753] his fellow priests, and he had been very ill, and attributed his

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngonde FN17
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younger one[1] gossips with her fellow, she does not go to the witches herself, but just talks to the other wife who calls the witches to her aid. These two wives say: 'The favourite has borne many children to her husband; we are poor' [i.e. the favourite gets an unfair share of her husband's attentions].

Kasitile speaks of his wives as 'witches' which, according to Nyakyusa ideas, they were, if they injured him, but he was also in the wrong to have shown his preference for Jane so clearly. As was shown in *Rituals of Kinship*, the shades are thought to punish such favouritism.

Towards the end of August Kasitile went to consult Ndembwe, a diviner and doctor, living nearly a day's journey away in the hills, who used a 'stick in the ground' as a divining rod. On his return Kasitile reported:

Ndembwe says it's the 'breath of men', not the wives, but the dispute about the beer. I paid him 1*s.* and drank three preparations of medicine at his place. He is coming here—I have found some beer and I am sending to call him tomorrow. Then Kasitile added confidentially: About the source of the 'breath' I am uncertain. Ndembwe suggested testing the wives. He can see the heavy ones, for in Ndali country he has drunk much medicine to give him spiritual power (*amasye*). He told me to come home, not to go back to Mwakyonde's country, and he is coming to give me medicine to drink and also to sprinkle medicine in the house. He will sleep here and see who it is that comes—he will know if the wives are heavy, or if it is the people of the country.

Kasitile's uncertainty was apparent. The first diviner had stated clearly that the sickness came from the witchcraft of the wives, but Kasitile wanted a further test.

We were away from Selya for some time and did not hear of any further developments in Kasitile's illness until early in 1937. By then a new reason for his ill-health had been put forward, viz. his impiety in cutting all the branches off a tree growing at the entrance to a sacred grove which has sprung up over his father's grave. He cut the tree because it was encroaching on his home-stead. Then he fell ill and he went to consult Ndembwe again.

He asked me: 'Have you done something wrong at home?' I replied: 'No, I have done nothing wrong.' 'But the oracle says you have done wrong at home.' I said: 'Perhaps it is because I cut a tree at the

[1] Sister of the favourite Jane. To accuse Jane's sister would cast a slur on Jane, for witchcraft is normally hereditary.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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753 entrance to the grove?' Ndembwe told me, 'You will get no cattle',
688 and indeed the cows are aborting. He told me: 'Brew beer and look
[787] for a sheep[1] and pray to your grandfather.'

782 Kasitile did not find an animal for sacrifice. He slaughtered a kid 'just for meat', killing it near the grove, but without praying or taking any of the meat into the grove, for it is not customary to offer goat's meat to the shades. His health improved a little, for a
787 time, but again he got worse and went off to see another diviner, saying: 'Perhaps there is some other cause; perhaps Ndembwe is mistaken.' He decided to go to consult an oracle some distance away 'because the oracle near home does not convince us; those who live near know all our wrongdoings; those at a distance don't know the affairs of the homesteads here'. This time Godfrey Wilson was invited to accompany him 'since he was his friend'.

Record of G.W. 8/2/37

787 We left Isumba about 7 a.m. and walked for an hour over the hills
753 through the bush. Kasitile had sent his wives, Jane and Kilulelí, on ahead to tell the diviner, Nsoki, that we were coming. . . . He came in
● [791] from the fields to meet us and was taken aback by the presence of a
[186] European. Kasitile kept saying: 'Do not be startled, he is from home, he is our friend.' . . . Food was served, then Nsoki's wife brought out some cooked millet porridge for the divination. He broke off a large piece and began to roll it between his hands. He smeared ointment on his hands and added powdered medicine. . . . He rolled and rolled, sometimes throwing the ball up and catching it again, spitting on his hands meantime. He murmured as he rolled, then at last he said to Kasitile, 'Speak!' Kasitile called his two wives to come near, and he explained his symptoms and the circumstances, how the sickness had fallen on him just after he had cut the tree in the sacred grove.

Nsoki asked for other possibilities. Kasitile: 'Perhaps the country is angry—I am a senior there. If it is the fathers who are angry I admit
[684] having done wrong. Perhaps my wives have committed adultery in the long grass and they are the cause of the illness.' Nsoki rolled and rolled the ball of porridge speaking aloud: 'It is Kyala above?' (looking up).
[778] Kasitile interrupted him: 'Yes, indeed, Kyala, but Kyala stands where he stood at home, does he stand alone? He stands with the fathers.' Nsoki (as he rolled the porridge): 'Your fathers are angry about that grove?' Then the ball of porridge flattened out in his hands and he broke off . . . 'No, that is not the cause' (*side plate 128*).

Rolling it into a ball again he went on: 'Your wives have committed

[1] This was Kasitile's own account. Others told us that he had been advised to look for a doll.

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787 753 clearly inclined to the shades as it had before the divination, but as before the certain conviction was lacking.

Four days later (12/2/37) Kasitile went to Nsesa in Kituli village to consult the oracle again 'for that of Nsoki went wrong'. He told us afterwards 'This oracle supported the finding of Ndembwe's. It said: [775] [769] Your kinsman who is dead is angry; he says, "Why did you not celebrate the ritual? I am tired of the hair (*Ngatale nayo inasili*). And what did you offer your father after cutting that tree?" ' Here yet another cause of Kasitile's illness is suggested—the neglect of the death ritual of a kinsman. The implication is that the chief mourners have [765] [302] not yet performed the concluding rite of shaving which makes it possible for the deceased to join his fathers. The hair which the mourners shave off is called 'the hair of the corpse'.

QUESTION: What are you going to do then?

[688] [602] KASITILE: I shall charge the young man, son of my dead kinsman, with neglect, and tell him to celebrate the ritual that the shades which have bound me may go out of my body.

QUESTION: And the bull?

KASITILE: If I can find one I shall kill it.

QUESTION: Who will be there?

[793] KASITILE: The priests will be there, Ngulyo, Kisegula, Njobakosa, Mwalukuta and Mwakasukula,[1] and also Mwaipopo (116) himself. Were I a commoner I should kill alone with my younger brothers, but since I am a public personage (*ofi akalamba*) the village headmen are there. (To Mwaikambo, the clerk.) It is good at your home in the hills; here things are bad.

QUESTION: But they also have shades?

[775] [178] KASITILE: But they are not important. Look you, I just cut a tree and they have seized me and dwell in my body. Are there sacred groves in the hills? Do men visit them? There in the hills rituals have died; the *puberty ritual and the rituals of the groves are celebrated very little.*

787 791 753 On 27th March Kasitile looked in to say that he was going to consult a visiting Sangu doctor 'from very far off' about his cough, but G.W. had better not come lest his presence spoil the divination. Kasitile came again after the consultation, full of excitement. 'What a doctor! That is a doctor indeed! That is a diviner! He took an axe and divined with it; he took coppers which I brought and threw them in a little pot, together with the axe, and salt, and he said: "You also take salt and throw it in" and I did so. Then he looked into the little pot and said: "You built on the plain!" He knew this without being told! I said: "Yes".'

SANGU: There was a quarrel there.

[1] The last two are priests of Mbaanga (*vide* p. 80) who did not in their own Mwanakasukula, Kasitile's assistant, who did come is not mentioned.

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KASITILE: Yes indeed.
SANGU: Now your body is sick, you are coughing.
KASITILE: Yes indeed, I am ill, and I am coughing a great deal.
SANGU: Yes, it is that quarrel down there. You came with the cough from the plain.
KASITILE: Yes, I came with it.
SANGU: You are a priest, you are a senior priest. (He knew this himself!)
KASITILE: Yes indeed.
SANGU: But the cough comes from the quarrel in the plain. If you were not a priest you would have died.
KASITILE: Indeed, we quarrelled over land, over the boundaries, on the plain. I hoed someone else's land—the land of a commoner there.
SANGU: They placed something to injure you.

Kasitile paused in his narrative and we asked how the 'something' operated.

KASITILE: In dreams, by means of their witchcraft.

The Sangu told me: 'It is this which causes you to cough continually, but there is something else also, you did not move to the plain from here without trouble.'

KASITILE: No, I moved with an accusation against me.
SANGU: Yes indeed, you did wrong and now your fathers are very angry.
KASITILE: Yes, I cut a tree.
SANGU: Mother! You cut a tree? The fathers and Kyala are brooding over you, Kyala is angry and broods over you. Pray, pray very much. It is you who are throttling the cattle of the country.

We expressed surprise and Kasitile continued: 'Yes, indeed. The Sangu said: "It is your wrongdoing (in cutting the tree) which is causing the cows to abort. I will clear out the thing which came with you from the plain. Bring us. tomorrow." He's a great doctor, Mwaipaja.'

The astonishing thing was that Kasitile, a man of considerable intelligence and inclined to query the truth of the revelations of some oracles, was so much impressed by the fact that the foreign doctor (staying in the country) knew that he was a priest and had sojourned in the plain, though to anyone knowing KiNyakyusa well his connexion with the plain was apparent in his speech, and his bearing indicated him as a personage.

Talking of the divination three days later, Kasitile told us the Sangu doctor had said: 'You have done wrong at home. This Kyala (pointing to the little pot into which he was looking) knows that Lwembe and the Kings and your father are angry, your father is very important, he works with Kyala, he is with him.'

As a treatment for the cough the doctor put various ingredients with

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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some live coals into a small calabash and held them against Kasitile's chest 'to clear out the blood of coughing'. To pacify the shades a pot of medicines in water was put on the fire; the doctor, Kasitile, and his 'senior wife' (actually her younger sister, as Jane was away) each held the pot with a crooked finger. Then Kasitile and all his wives and children were sprinkled with the hot medicines. And the doctor told Kasitile to sacrifice a bull.

During the following week preparations for the sacrifice went ahead. Kasitile walked for some hours through the forest to call Mwamakunda, his fellow priest who always assisted him in the celebrations at Lubaga and 'sprinkling the country'. Mwamakunda is a very old man, contemporary of Kasitile's father, and he asked: 'Are you bringing your European to the sacrifice?'

KASITILE: Yes.

MWAMAKUNDA: But your father Mwakanjoki (fn) did not know any Europeans, he feared them, he died without ever meeting one. After your father died, when your elder brother was alive, Europeans came —GERMANS—and cut down a tree, the *umuali* tree in the sacred grove near Kamesu; blood gushed out, it shouted so that it was heard in BuKinga.

Kasitile explained that the Germans had wanted timber. Afterwards Mwaipopo (the chief 116) sought a sheep and they tried to put the grove to rights ('close up') by sacrificing it. This was the tree beside which the sacred meat was always put when they sacrificed in the grove. Now one branch has grown up again from the roots.

Mwamakunda went on: 'But you did wrong at the beginning not to take the European to pray, and to tell Mwakanjoki (fn) that he should not be afraid, the European has made himself our friend.' Kasitile, reporting the interview to us said: 'I concealed that *we went together to the grove to pray (vide supra, p. 115)* and Mwamakunda told me: "Let the European take something, let it stay overnight in the house, and go with him, and pray very much. . . . Mwakanjoki has gone off in a huff from your home, you have offended him yourself. Go with the European, take him to your father's home. Now your father has taken offence, he is shaking your body by night because you cut the tree; you have done wrong."' I.e. two causes for the anger of the shades and Kasitile's consequent sickness were given: (i) the cutting of the tree by Mwakanjoki's grave and (ii) Godfrey Wilson's presence at rituals and at Kasitile's homestead. So before the sacrifice of expiation for pruning the grove was performed Godfrey Wilson went to be introduced to Kasitile's shades for the second time.

Record of G.W. 31/1/37

In the evening as the sun was setting, I went to Kasitile's house with a cloth and so. He put them in the house, took down the calabash which

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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are said to give their wives a medicine (without their knowledge) which will cause any man who lies with them to fall ill of gonorrhoea or some other venereal disease. Many Christians believe in this medicine and some inquired whether Europeans did not use it also. One family of doctors are specialists in it:

The sons of Manyafa are very famous, they are great doctors. People fear them very much. No one can steal anything belonging to them or run off with their wives. If a man runs off with a wife of theirs, he will return their wife and pay. . . . Because when he has slept with the woman by night they stink in each other's nostrils, the woman stinks in the face of the man and he likewise in hers. And if rain falls by night the roof comes off the hut in which they sleep and the rain enters. Perhaps the man quarrels with the woman, perhaps frogs and snakes are numerous, perhaps gourds sprout in the house—sometimes they sprout bringing evil. So it is also if a man has run off with the wife of another and the husband goes to the sons of Manyafa. They agree to work, but he must pay them.

Lyandileko, whose husband's family have owned a 'horn' for generations, was very insistent that vengeance magic maintained law and order for it could injure only the guilty. 'A thief feared to steal lest he be caught by my father-in-law (Mwasyelage). He feared the horn if he used sorcery. He feared to seize another's cow thinking, "They will go to Mwasyelage".' And protective medicines which cause an adulterer to fall ill of gonorrhoea, or a thief to die, are considered perfectly legitimate; the misfortune would not have befallen the man unless he had done wrong.

The prohibition by the government of the *masi* oracle has puzzled people. Medicines are admittedly dangerous, but it is held that Europeans 'encourage' witches and sorcerers by forbidding the use of the one effective weapon against them, and doctors with vengeance magic or other strong medicines 'fear the fate of the *masi* doctors'. There is an inescapable contradiction here, the Nyakyusa relying on *masi* and vengeance magic as a means of discovering criminals, and the Europeans punishing any doctor found administering poison, or intimidating people by threats. Furthermore, it is widely believed that Europeans themselves use strong medicines made up with blood. Any Europeans without an obvious occupation are suspect of being *abapumbuzi*, who go around killing people and taking their blood for the Government to use for medicines. One of our European friends,

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1959
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Nyakyusa

a missionary, was warned by her servants before Godfrey Wilson's arrival in her neighbourhood 'not to go out at night as there were *abapombolo* about, sent by the Government to kill people and take their blood', and women going for firewood made a long detour to avoid his camp. One was overheard asking when she caught sight of him: 'Is that the man who kills people?' Angumbwike explained that, since all really strong Nyakyusa medicines contained human blood, it was argued that European medicines, which were so powerful, must contain it also. 'They follow their own customs.'

It seems obvious to the Nyakyusa that Europeans must have strong medicines because their confidence and success are so great. Moreover, it is held (in theory) that they are immune to attacks from witchcraft. K, who had been a clerk and lost his job, and was bitter, expanded on this:

> People say that Europeans have *injifolo* (*vide* p. 58), see they are brave, they do not fear, if someone seizes a spear they do not fear, they just come to him, they are very brave. And also the witches say that they are unable to choke Europeans. When we hear people boasting of their mystical power (*amaupe*) we always say to them: 'But if that is so, go and choke a European, show us!' Then they always say, 'Oh no, we can't do that, when we go to a European house at night we find it all lighted up and flaming, we can't get near them.' I think this is the power of the Holy Spirit which you Europeans have.

He came of a well-known family of doctors and perhaps spoke from first-hand knowledge. He just laughed at the suggestion that the light might come from lamps. But the fact that Europeans were held to be immune did not prevent our servants and friends attributing our recurring attacks of malaria to witchcraft.

(c) DOCTORS

Among the Nyakyusa, as perhaps in every society, the doctors with the greatest reputation are those at a distance, and a high proportion of the practitioners in the country are of foreign lineages, their fathers, or grandfathers, or great-grandfathers having come in, bringing medicines with them, and begun to practice. In fact, we were assured that there were no Nyakyusa doctors who were famous, they were all Ilanga, or Kinga, or Kisi, or from Ngonde or Mlenda in Nyasaland, but detailed investigation proved this to be false. The trade in medicines from a distance is a very old one and continues today. As we have seen,

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1959
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[791] [98] [270] [498] *Ngindo* comes from west of Ngonde, or east of the Kinga; *mwaj* came from 'Nyamland'; medicine for fertility of the fields from Mlenka which is rich in food; war medicine from the Sangu and Kinga. Whether neighbouring people get medicines from Ba-Nyakyusa we do not know—no one ever suggested it, but it is likely that they do.

[771] Since foreign doctors and medicines have the highest reputation new treatments are welcomed. This is where the practice of medicines differs radically from the rituals directed to the shades in which the charter is tradition, and any deviation must be justified. But the willingness to accept something new did not lead to any systematic experiment, or any regard for experiment as such.

[791] [278] Anyone who chooses, and can pay the fee, can become a doctor by apprenticing himself to a practitioner of repute, but it is very noticeable that the majority of well-known doctors come from families of doctors, the medicines being passed down from one generation to the next and sometimes taught to wives as well. Lyandiko, who has often been quoted, was taught certain medicines by her husband, and had a large practice. The diviners we know were all men, but many women know a number of medicines. Once in practice, a doctor may add to his knowledge by buying a medicine from a fellow practitioner or exchanging medicines with him. One doctor we know had paid two bulls for the secret of his protective medicine (*umbelo gwa ginga*). The cooking includes what plants or other ingredients to collect and how to 'cook' them, i.e. what to mix together and what quantities to use. As elsewhere in Africa, it is the material substances, usually vegetable, which is held to be important in any treatment. The spell—the words addressed to the medicine—is of little significance except that when conjurers magic is prepared the man on whose behalf it is done may say the name of his enemy (if he knows his identity) and state his own innocence in a phrase like the following: 'Return this medicine, thou Kyala, I have done no wrong whatsoever to cause me to be killed; if he says he will kill me let him die.'

[717] [713] The doctor (*nganga*) who 'knows medicines' is distinguished from the priest or diviner (*nganga*) who knows how to conduct a ritual directed to the shades or heaven. The *nganga* uses medicines in celebrating rituals, and he or she may be able to collect and prepare plants himself, but he sometimes has to apply to a doctor

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for an appropriate medicine, and his main function is organising the observances.

(d) [illegible]

In the field of medicine imagination runs riot, and associations are unpredictable. The ingredients of most medicines are professional secrets and unknown to the user who takes the concoction on trust from his doctor, and inquires no further. Therefore the study of medicine is not linked to the study of social relationships in the same manner as is the study of ritual, for the symbolism of medicines is individual and free, whereas the symbolism of ritual is common and obligatory.

Nevertheless, the imagination of doctors works within the general symbolic system, and such knowledge as we have indicates that many of the associations made are similar to those used in ritual. In medicine, as in the rituals of kinship, one type of banana stands for a male, another for a female, a banana sucker represents a mountain, a sprouting shoot conception. Knitting and cotton are felt to be alike, and the cotton iron that trickles out of a forge is linked with menstrual blood. Hair stands for growth, and a bald pate a devastated field. A ring, or circumambulation, implies a protecting fence. Pythons, crocodiles, leopards, and lions stand for power and majesty, spears and thorns for attack; vomiting and emptiness for innocence, spitting for forgiveness. There is colour symbolism in medicines (though we know little of it save that the dolphi which stands for the blood of the lineage is red, or reddish brown), and auditory symbolism, the rumble of thunder and the groaning of a bellows being identified. Men mimic that which they wish to avoid, as well as that which they desire; like things are sympathetic as well as sympathetic. No doubt a laborious study of prescriptions would reveal further general principles of association, as well as the range of individual imagination, but such a task has yet to be undertaken.

9: Wilson E-9 (1934-1951) 1959
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escape through Bulyakyusa in the early 1930's; perhaps other similar movements preceded it—we do not know. What is clear is that traditionally there was continuous public pressure to overcome hatred within the village and the kinship group; to rid oneself of it by confession and an expression of goodwill. In pagan thought Utopia is a society without witches or sorcerers and, though it was never achieved, everyone is convinced that formerly these evil-doers were fewer than now, because they were restrained by law, whereas 'witches' now go scot-free.

The interests of the Nyakyusa are personal and practical. Health, fertility, and amity between kinsmen and neighbours are what they seek. It is with rain and drought, with the rise of the Lake or the striking of lightning which destroys property, with stock, crops, and the wild animals which prey upon them that the myths are concerned. We could trace no cults of the sun, moon, and stars, and no rituals are directed to them. Reference is made to volcanic disturbance in the myths of the heroes—'the ground rumbled' when Nkolosi and Kyala walked, and there are traces of small lakes disappearing and reappearing elsewhere—but the concern shown is surprisingly little if an eruption indeed destroyed villages last century as Mr. Barker's single informant suggests (*vide supra*, p. 18).

Reality is thought to be revealed to men in dreams, by prophets who 'go down thinking like the roots of a tree' to the world of the shades, and by oracles. What men seek to know are the causes of misfortune—public and private—and the identity of witches. Occasionally, it is said, a prophet has looked into the future and foretold drought, or flood, or the coming of Europeans—'white things on the Lake'—against whom it would be foolish to fight, but for the most part they are concerned with the misfortunes that exist, and urging men to pray to the graves. The communication is not honoured in Nyakyusa tradition; the man of spiritual power is a detective—a discoverer of evil-doers—or an administrator whose ruthless skill is to his authority.

Men are preoccupied with their relationships to other living men—their kinsmen, neighbours, and fellow office-holders—and with their dead fathers. They are not concerned with their relationship to Kyala. The rituals addressed by kinsmen are directed to the shades not to any supreme God, and it is quarrelling between kinsmen that angers the shades and makes the celebration of certain rituals necessary. The communal rituals are

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ceremonies and of Kyuse[1]. At the same time he moved his curved wand to and fro on the ground and when he did so, it indicated a negative answer from the beings invoked. But when he was asked: "Is the guilt for the sickness to be found in the husband of the chief's sister?", he was unable to move his wand as before; he could only stamp it on the ground, and this meant an affirmative reaction of the invoked spirits. Now, therefore, the meeting had reached its aim. 787 [776]

I asked the diviner to tell me how he had acquired his faculty. He explained that (besides the necessary inner disposition) the payment of a fee for the medical preparation was necessary in order to become a diviner[2]. This outfit consisted in a special vaccination by a learned diviner. For this purpose the neophyte was incised by his master on different spots on the upper side of the knuckles, and in these small incisions was rubbed a medical powder. By these means the initiate may be inspired by the prophesying spirits. These influences are then felt by the diviner as a power which directs the movements of his hand in the manner described. 791 [304]

6. Near the hut of the chief's principal wife was a "sacred" banana plant, in the grove opposite to the chief's hut and in the grove with the graves of the chief's father already described. At particular times, when any need demands it, the chief offers a prayer in this place to his ancestors[3]. The sickness of his sister, for instance, was such an occasion for him to address the ancestors. I was invited by the chief to witness this act, but I raised objections, telling him that my presence might perhaps rather cause the anger than the help of his ancestors. In reality, I did not want the chief to stage a theatrical act on my behalf. But the chief rejected my excuses and explained that he would act in the same manner as if I were not present, because he had made up his mind to this prayer. The chief was assisted during this ceremony by Mwaisyukule who presented to the chief a calabash of water as he arrived at the banana plant devoted to this purpose. The chief took some mouthfuls of the water and squirted it towards the banana plant. Then he recited the names of his ancestors and begged them to help his sister. 824 778 782 769 [23]

7. During one afternoon, I was told that a ceremony to end the initiation of a (betrothed) girl was going on in a family of the village. 831

[1] name of the supreme spiritual being.
[2] Cf. Merkemeyer, p. 226.
[3] Merkemeyer refers that such a place is named "isiyinja", "the family place of prayer" (pp. 146, 197), but without indication of the locality, as Kyimage.

792

792 [illegible]—graphics and manuscripts; executive and orchestrics; mimics, dolorts, and mimes; mimetic orders (e.g., mandicum, burmah, vaudeite); mimetorium and convents (e.g., organization, activitant); mimetic roles (e.g., poverty, celibacy); characteristics, status, and means of support of body stars, etc.

See also:

[illegible] . . . . . 600 Concept of sanctity 700
[illegible] . . . . . 600 [illegible] 700
[illegible] . . . . . 600 Dance 791
Poverty and [illegible] 700

3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngonde FN17

roll of the Great War was a terrifying revelation of the unyielding nature of the Europeans in a quarrel.

Individual chiefs had special methods of securing victory. Mwamakula's wife, when her husband marched out with his forces, sat on a live sheep as long as the fighting went on: so ensuring good luck to her husband in taking cattle, and preventing them running away when taken. Another wife sat on a cooking pot, to keep the enemy in a state of security while the warriors were closing in on them. They would go about as usual, unaware of danger, cooking and eating, until the storm burst, and there was no hope of defence. His sister had a *leaso* similar to the one carried into battle; and one of his old men lay down on the path, each soldier stepping over him as he passed on. While the fight was being waged, this old man sat on his haunches and pulled himself forward in that position, the effect being to make the enemy run. The *leaso* was carried heedlessly by Mtwimi, and when he laid it down it moved forward of itself as the enemy retired.

In the north there was a great prophet, whose presence in the battle always assured the victory to his own side; but if he retired, even for a moment, the battle turned, and he was brought back, by force if necessary.

Two great wars still stand out in the minds of the people: the victorious march of the Angoni, and the driving invasion of the so-called Arabs. Both these enemies brought with them methods of fighting unknown to the Konde, who fled before the Angoni,

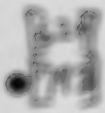
3: Mackenzie M-S (ca. 1925) 1925
FN17 Ngondo FN17

and it may be so, but there is a variant, which is free 773
from suspicion, in which the God came back to life
in the form of a serpent, was cut to pieces by his
fellow-gods and the elders, who, when he again came
back, served him as before, upon which he went to
the white man, who to this day prays to him. As
Kavonga the old people used to say, "We have eaten
the Son of God in the rock," but I have not been
able to trace the origin or connection of the saying,
except that it is not Christian, and may be connected
with traditions of *Ngoloa*.

The story of *Mbasi* is very different. He is the 774
evil one, to whom deceit and wickedness are a pleasure. 792
Europeans are still living who have seen the great
stone of ivory and cloth which were offered to him
by terror-inspired people, and laid up in a cave at
Mukuma on the lake shore. The cave has now been
robbed of its contents, as *Mbasi* himself has been of
whatever of dread his name inspired in the past. It
is not very long ago that the last prophet of *Mbasi*
died. He lived near Mamba, and within living memory
he climbed a small eminence there, and proclaimed
that *Mbasi* demanded cattle to be sent to him without
delay, the prophet himself being the guardian ap-
pointed by the God. And the cattle were sent in
goodly numbers!

Long ago, says a legend, when *Mbasi* walked 773
the earth, he had men who were always with him. 776
Mwenemale went with him to his friend Mwakanyamuna. *Mbasi* told them many things, of witchcraft, of hunger, of disease that were to come, of the

793



8:Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

chief from the various attacks of witches; but if ever there is a just ground of offence they are believed to join their own power of witchcraft in the general attack. I know one chief who dare not give a judgement in a dispute between two of his villages for fear of the indignant witchcraft of the losing side. And a general unpopularity is believed always to lead, sooner or later to a chief's death.

Chiefs also, like other men, fear the use of sorcery (i.e. destructive magic) against them, and use a number of protective "medicines" (i.e. materials of magic) to protect themselves from it. They also use powerful "medicines" to give themselves personal impressiveness, prestige and authority among their people.

While in the families of commoners an ancestral spirit is only believed to affect the lives of his own descendants, the ancestors of a chief, on the other hand, are supposed to influence, for good or ill, the fortunes of whole chiefdoms. Rain and good crops, the fertility of women and cattle are dependent upon their good will, which in its turn is believed to depend upon a successful sacrifice of cows. And for this sacrifice the chiefs, their living descendants, are responsible.* But, owing to the continuous division of chiefdoms every generation, several chiefs are concerned in each sacrifice; every dead chief is a source of misfortune or of blessing to the countries of all his direct descendants. And so the discussion of this part of the Nyakyusa religion leads us to the investigation of the groups which extend beyond the boundaries of a single chiefdom.

(c) *Groups wider than the Chiefdom*

When a chief dies he is buried near the house of his senior great wife and trees are planted on his grave. The trees grow and form a sacred grove (*ikyumbi*) hedged by taboos. Each of these groves is at first the religious centre of one, later of a number of chiefdoms, and to them the sacrifices are made. Responsibility for looking after one sacrifice to a particular grave rests with one of the living chiefs concerned, but responsibility for initiating the ritual and performing it lies not only with the chiefs but also with the hereditary priests (*asenyagi*) to each chiefdom. These hereditary priests are descended, some from the great commoners of the dead chief who is buried in that particular grave, some from his half-brothers. The ritual is eaten; there is no gathering of the people at the sacrifice, and only chiefs and priests with hereditary priesthoods

*I am speaking here of the religious customs of the Nyakyusa proper and the Ngonde people. I believe those of the Kukwe and Mwaisiba are very similar, but I have not studied them in detail.

6: Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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769 come to it. But, on the other hand, everyone knows when a sacrifice is
773 taking place, and, in spite of the influence of missions, most people in the
● 791 pagan community believe in its efficacy.

783 Sacrifices are prompted either by actual misfortune or by prophecies
787 of it. The four sacrifices which I have seen myself were all stimulated by an actual shortage of food, and the hereditary priests have often told me that "now-a-days the chiefs do not listen to us until hunger comes." But, traditionally, sacrifices are said to have been usually prompted by prophecies of coming misfortune which was then averted by them. So each chiefdom the ruling great commoners, the hereditary priests and some private persons as well are believed to have the power of dreaming of misfortune (*ukulanguluka*) before it comes. And the chiefs are said always to have listened to these dreams, formerly, and to have acted upon them.

773 Among the graves there is an order of seniority; the older the grave
777 the more chiefdoms are concerned in the sacrifices there. And in Selya is the most important grave of all—Lubaga. All the chiefdoms of Selya, many of the Nyakyusa proper and even some of the neighbouring chiefdoms of the Mwambo are traditionally concerned in its sacrifices. Lubaga, the Nyakyusa say, is the grave of Lwembe, one of the original chiefs who came down the Livingstone Mountains from the East, eight or nine generations ago; and from him all the present Selya chiefs are descended. The ancestor of the chiefs of the Nyakyusa proper was a brother of Lwembe; and though the Kukwe and Mwambo chiefs are not related, yet those of the Mwambo who are nearest to Lubaga used to send cows there for sacrifice as well, because of the great reputation that this grave had.

[illegible] Sacrifices are still made to the country of the chief of Lubaga
[illegible] (Mwakinyogi) for all the surrounding chiefdoms, but the full ritual has not been carried out for twenty years. Traditionally each chief of Lubaga was ritually installed into a position somewhat resembling that of Sir James Frazer's "Divine Kings," a position hedged with taboos, in which not only the sacrifices he made to Lwembe for his own health and fertility also were believed to be intimately connected with the prosperity of his own and neighbouring chiefdoms. But the present chief has never been properly installed, nor was his father before him. The sacrifices at Lubaga are believed to benefit not only the Nyakyusa but also the near tribes to the East, the Kinga, who live on the heights of the Livingstone Mountains; for Lwembe, they say, was born a Kinga and moved down the mountains to Lubaga, taking the fertility of the soil with him. And

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are redrawn and only the fields in old centres (the most prized and fertile of all) are not re-allotted. Thus the villages of kinsmen of two generations adjoin, and often those of three generations.

On the old chief's death his village headmen become priests of the grove in which he is buried, and, in co-operation with his son, the new chief, sacrifice there on behalf of the two countries into which his old chiefdom is divided. There is a nice balance of power between chief and village headmen in life, and when he dies his two heirs and the headmen (or their heirs) continue to share power, the power which belief in his spiritual force and their ability to guide it gives them. The success or failure of rituals is held largely to depend upon the personal relationships of the leading participants, chiefs and commoner priests.

Besides the ordinary commoner priests (the village headmen of a past generation or their heirs) there are priests of the chiefs' lineage, usually belonging to a junior line to which specific ritual functions, such as rain-making, have been entrusted, and whose office is hereditary in the same way as that of a chief. Kaitila (30),[1] the rain-maker, is such a priest: his grandfather was the brother of a ruling chief (23) and had been appointed as rain-maker (*ungelyelo*) and priest (*ungaga*), the two functions being separate but overlapping. As rain-maker Kaitila tended the rain stones, as priest he initiated the rituals in certain of the sacred groves, though he did not actually officiate himself. Kaitila was a key informant on ritual and a chapter is devoted to his history, since it epitomizes the relationships between chiefs and commoners.

As we have shown, most of the Nyakyusa and Ngonde chiefs claim some sort of kinship with one another. Those who are nearly related pray together at the graves of their common ancestors, and those more distantly connected join in sacrifice to their founding fathers, but in the communal rituals kinship is neither the dominant theme nor the exclusive principle of association, as it is in the rituals celebrated by private persons. In the communal rituals most of the priests are commoners unrelated to the dead who are honoured, and the sacrifices are held to benefit not only the descendants of the dead, but all those who live in the countries they once ruled. Nevertheless, the symbolism of the communal rituals commonly recalls that of the rituals of kinship; themes which pervade the death ritual recur again in the rituals of 'coming out' and 'cleansing the country'. This background is

[1] Numerals after a name refer to the genealogy of Nyakyusa chiefs facing p. 9.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
FN17 Ngunde FN17
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round him and sit at home in the middle in the sun. . . . All the old chiefs inspired fear (*lupale*). It used to be taboo to walk near the house of a chief and approach him unless taken by a village headman . . . nowadays men walk about and enter his home and even steal his food.'[1] The power came partly from his position as the living Lwembe, and partly from the medicines with which he was ensured, especially the mythic *ifingila*.

The 'divine king' who came as a conqueror bringing iron is also associated with victory in battle. Still today a brave fighter is saluted as 'Lwembe', and an iron spear is one of the emblems of chieftainship.

The Lwembe was himself a priest—he is often referred to as *nyanga*—but he was assisted by commoners. There is a hereditary keeper of the grove of Lubaga named Kimoshi who is the descendant of that Kimoshi the commoner who fled from BuKinga with Lwembe. It is he who conducts the sacrifices, who shaves the participants with medicines before they enter, and who protects the graves. 'If by mistake the grove was a little burnt then the people here paid a beast to Kimoshi, it was his to eat as he liked.' Others of the priests say that Lwembe found their ancestors at Lubaga; they are 'owners of the soil' there, and one of them, Mwanzi, could give us the names of six generations of ancestors who had been priests of Lubaga before him. But the bulk of the commoner priests are not hereditary at all, they are surviving village headmen (or their heirs) of the men recently dead Lwembe.

The success of the sacrifices at Lubaga was held to depend upon the proper cooperation of chiefs and priests: first, as the Lwembe himself (the shortage of food among the Kinga, and of milk among the Nyakyusa, while we were there, was attributed by Lwembe to the fact that there was no living Lwembe); secondly on the commoner priests of Lubaga, thirdly on the commoner Kinga priests, fourthly on Lwembe (B) and certain other priests of Selya, and fifthly on the chiefs of the Nyakyusa and the Kinga who provided the offerings. 'Can a priest celebrate alone?' said Lwembe. 'No, the ritual depends on the chiefs.' The celebrations thus linked together chiefs and people, as well as Kinga and Nyakyusa, and numerous different Nyakyusa chiefdoms. The hereditary Kinga priests live in the country of the Kinga chief Mwakalebwa and

[1] This is inconsistent with Kaduli's statement quoted above. The general opinion was that chiefs were more powerful than formerly, but the living Lwembe less so.

N Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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Nyakyusa

'Lwembe came to him'. 'If Kings messengers went [to Lubaga] without going through Mwaluluhwa's country there would be much hunger. . . . Once Mwamusi and Kyelele [Kings chief] conspired together and sent off men with love to Lubaga, without reference to Mwaluluhwa. They carried no love. But when they got back disease killed many in the country, and they paid Mwaluluhwa and did not do it again.'

It is true that an independent Nyakyusa chief can send an offering to Lubaga on his own; it is received by the priests of Lubaga and sacrificed in the grove, and such a sacrifice is held to be in some measure efficient, but drought or sickness in the country as a whole is often attributed to one or other of the participating groups failing to play their part. Moreover, such a failure is thought to be dangerous to the chief or priest who neglects his duties, as we shall see in the case of Lwembe.

The priests of Lubaga ministered to the Lwembe but they had also the right and duty of admonishing him if he did wrong, just as village headmen have the right and duty of admonishing their chief. If the Lwembe broke a taboo 'then Kimasile and the other priests would be very angry and reproach him for hating and making hunger, and he would pay them a bull to recompense.' Even the 'divine king' was subject to the rule of law. All through the political organization and ritual patterns of the Nyakyusa there is this balance and reciprocity between chief and commoners and it is here that the Nyakyusa system differs radically from that described by Professor Frankfort for ancient Egypt.[1] The Soviet had brought the gift of christianity to the Nyakyusa but it had not caused another, perhaps older, tradition of democratic leadership; instead, the two were united in a partnership which, to the Nyakyusa, is so much part of the necessary order of the universe that they speak of commoner priests and headmen as 'wives' of the chiefs. The Kimasile is often 'the wife' of the Lwembe.

In the grove at Lubaga sacrifices of black cattle and sheep and thousands of millet loaves were offered by the Nyakyusa, while the Kings brought here, besides beer, salt, the sacred drum-agama and (this, that is, married whose nature, Lwembe avowed, he did not know himself. The duties of Lubaga, and the actions and actions connected with it, are miraculous and terrible, terrible even to the priests themselves who tremble when they enter the grove, and

[1] H. Frankfort, Kingship and the Gods (1948), pp. 3-6.

and its help taken to Lolinga and added to the 'medicine for fertility' (mbolo gwa (fig)) which was sprinkled throughout the country, starting at Lolinga, proceeding to the other sacred groves, and then to the ordinary homesteads. Thus the terror of the ground, objective roots in the fact of human sacrifice, but it is rather a fear of the unknown and miraculous than of death itself; a fight involving casualties was not terrible in the same way as the grave and the deeds of the sacred drum.

The Kinga priests travelled 'the road of Lwemba', down the escarpment of the Livingstone mountains from Mwakalubwe's country and across Selya, beating their drum. They stopped to sleep at the house of Kasitile the priest, and poured a libation of beer at 'the places where Lwemba had rested': Isamba, a hill overlooking Kasitile's homestead, Kindi in Mwalupepe's country, and near the homestead of the priest Mbanyam.[1] 'He [Lwemba] used to shoot on Isamba, the little hill here, then no one would cut the tree on the hill,' said Kasitile. 'It was one of his resting places; he used to come here to tell my grandfather to go and get a wife for Lolinga, and later to tell my father to do so. . . .' The beer was poured at the base of an ehgle tree (a variety of fig) on Isamba, in the long grass in Kindi, and at the base of an ehgle tree in Mbanyam's homestead. 'They gave [it] out here by the ehgle, they beat the drum to say: "We have come", then the people of Mbanyam hide their children—that's all.' Besides the drum the Kinga travelled with a hide horn[2] (blown in battle in Bulungu) and a sacred drum and horn were lodged in the hut of the Lwemba's chief wife. Before they start the Kinga priests make an effigy of millet flour and beer in one of their own graves,[3] and leave there overnight the beer and milk and bone which they will take to the Lwemba, 'that the ehee-Ngulubwe (g) may see them before they go to Lwemba'.

At Lolinga there were several places of prayer and offering: the tree planted at the installation of the last living Lwemba (ehk-ghe ehk-ya) the tree planted at the installation of a previous

[1] Probably grandson of the real representative of a junior lineage to which priestly functions had been delegated.

[2] Kasitile's Kinga, Ngenge Isale in Nyakyusa, cf. plate 3b.

[3] Kasitile's Kinga chief, and now priest with Godfrey Wilson in a number of his dreams. The form of sacrifice is very similar to that among the Nyakyusa save that the vase containing a mixture of beer and flour is placed in the hole of a tree. The priests had gone over early in the morning to visit Kasitile (the chief chief) "for me to enquire, a European comes to give food".

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1959
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Lwembe, and the grave of the first Lwembe himself, the last being the most sacred. In it stands a miraculous tree from which, the priests aver, sometimes comes sap like water, and sometimes blood. 'If it is watery there will be a plague of storm in the country—running sores—if it is blood there will be dysentery. But as soon as the hens are placed in the grave, or the black bull is killed, then the sick begin to recover.'

Godfrey Wilson attended three celebrations at Lubaga, and we heard of five others which occurred during our period of field-work. The ritual is esoteric, that is to say, only the representatives of Lwembe and his private participate, and the details are not revealed to others, but its occurrence is widely known and discussed among older men.

The celebrations observed were modified by the fact that no one had been installed as Lwembe since the death of Mwakitolyo (q.v.) before 1914. The possible candidates whom the priests had wished to instal had refused—'they feared the grave'; the only one who was said to be willing was rejected on account of his character. The priests gave 'European times' as the reason for there being no Lwembe. 'When the country was new before you Europeans came' the elected candidate was compelled to accept office. On the death of Mwakitolyo, the Kings priests ordered that his senior son Mwaipaja I (q.v.) should take his place, and when Mwaipaja I died (three years after his father) his full brother Mwaipaja II (q.v.) succeeded. He took a leading part in the rituals observed, but was not an ancient Lwembe. The priests explained: 'We fear, thinking that if a chief is seized [and compelled to sit on the stool] he will complain to the Government and we shall be punished.' During the period of German rule they had been threatened with imprisonment if they continued the ritual.... 'we feared and stole through the country by night'..... And there is still much secrecy about its truncated celebration. Since the journey down 'the road of Lwembe' with the drum traditionally involved human sacrifice, and the Lwembe was swallowed when ailing, there is an obvious incompatibility between a full celebration of the ritual and European administration.

The influence of the Christian minority is also considerable. The view of most Nyakyusa Christians with whom we discussed communal rituals is that they used to be efficient, but are so no longer, since men have been taught a better way of approaching God. 'God said: "They are outsiders but in their hearts they are

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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Nyakyusa

looking for me", and so if there was much heat he would send rain.' But this no longer happens.

At the same time both pagans and Christians tell a myth of how a European missionary, Rev. — Jaun (*Mwaisumo*), who visited the grove of Lufingo intending to remove the lions in the grove to demonstrate the falsehood of the ritual, was confounded by a miracle (*ifilai*).

Once the missionary Mwaisumo wished to go and see the grove of Lufingo. He was warned that if he entered he would feel because there were many marvels there, and the rain would catch him. He said: 'Oh, I shall go, nothing will happen.' So he went and entered the grove, and he found many lions, some standing up, some lying down, and some of them had 'eyes'. He asked one to take it away, then there was a crash of thunder, and he was afraid and fled. When he ran out of the grove the rain fell in torrents. It is said that he was so frightened he left his jacket behind. From that time people said that indeed there are miracles at Lufingo.

'European times' is given as the reason for sacrifices being less frequent and regular than formerly. The occasions were, and still are: any period of hunger or scarcity, such as the Kings regularly experience during the dry season, and the Nyakyusa also complain of at that time; any irregular misfortune such as a failure of the rains, a plague of locusts or an epidemic; and any prediction of hunger or disease by a prophet (*mwalisi* or *mbonyolisi*). But the chiefs are said to be more reluctant to provide the cattle for sacrifice than formerly, and less quickly influenced by the usual occurrence of hunger or by prophecy that famine is imminent. Nevertheless they still 'wear the earth' (*ukutendikaya ensi*) by sending a black cow to Lufingo when hunger grows.

According to Kasitili (M) and Mwamukunda (his fellow priest) no ritual could be performed in the grove of the lion Lwembe when he had no living representative. Formerly, the Kimolo in office and another priest penetrated alone, and there found a lion sleep and left it to bless until a python took it. 'It is Kyala, to turn himself into a python' (*Ja Kyala: ipela ene*). Then Kasitili and Kyala in the name of 'the lord' and he was referring to Lwembe. According to another informant, when the lion or any priestland connected with Lufingo is installed he should sleep in the grove enclosed in a stone sticker hut, and remain there until the python of the grove comes and kills him. The case was cited of a priest who had his captive for two weeks

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1935) 1919
F307 Ngonde F307
Nyakyusa

and come home 'very thin', but just when this happened was not clear.

We turn now to the account of the three sacrifices witnessed at Lufingo which illustrates (a) the occasions of celebration, (b) the procedure, and (c) the tensions between the participants. In the ritual described on pp. 55-6, Mwaklilima (1911) complained that most of the chiefs of Selya did not even recognize his ritual supremacy by sending cattle to kill at Lufingo, but Kasitile the priest ensured that Mwaklilima himself, in his capacity as a chief, was slow to provide the cattle for sacrifice required by his own priests.

In July 1933, two Kings priests, Kilungulaja and Nyasingwe, came from the Kings chief Mwakalukwa to Lufingo, with an offering of beer. A bull, provided by Mwaklilima (1911) as chief of Lwembe's line, was then killed beside a tree planted at the 'coming out' of Mwakilimya (38), the last Lwembe, on the site on which the house of his second wife, Kilugu, was built, and the meat was thrown into the old banana grove close by. At the end of September the same two priests returned (each accompanied by a grandson) bringing bamboo beer and tax, and a bull with which to buy a bull to sacrifice again, for the Kings were suffering hunger and a prophet in their country had gone into a trance and prophesied cold, disease, and hunger, and urged the chiefs to pray. No bull had brought the hunger, they said, but 'the diadem with a cow. The diadem say: "Formerly we ate much, now you do not kill cows for us, indeed we with to eat. . . ." Therefore much hunger affects our country. It is on this account that we Kings came with a bull and beer. When the blood of the sacrifice sank into the earth then the diadem are satisfied, and they also receive the meat from the upper living (*ipamaga*)."[1]

The initiative came from the Kings who were suffering most severely, but the Nyakyusa were also complaining of scarcity. The weather was very hot and dry and Mwaklilima (1911) remarked to Kasitile (38) the priest, who had come up to Lufingo for the sacrifice: 'You have killed us with this sun.' He was referring to the unusually small yield of early maize and beans which had been scorched by the drought. Kasitile replied: 'No, all of us [are responsible], the sun has hated us.' Both men smiled.

Five days after the Kings reached Lufingo (28th September 1934) the sacrifice was offered up. The men concerned gathered in

[1] The words are of Monica Wilson, 'Rituals of Kinship among the Nyakyusa', p. 46.

9: Wilson E-4 (1934-1935) 1935
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Nyakyusa

children, not the married ones with wives. Kimole and I both have our children assisted now.'

This ritual was not complete because Mwanjala disliked the ritual act of remaining in the grove until a python licked him. The Kinga priests were continually nagging at the Nyakyusa for their failure to provide an acceptable Lwembe, but it is doubtful whether in 1933 Mwanjala II would have been acceptable to any of them since he was old and ailing. It was Mwakilima (1911) that was worried and he steadily refused to be installed.

The next ritual observed at Lubaga was in March 1933. An ordinary commoner of Selya (not a priest) named Kinja had been prophesying repeatedly: 'I do not sleep, you will not eat the crops you lose if you do not go to Lubaga.' He was taken to his village headman and thence to the chief Mwalinja (1917) who finally, two years after he had begun prophesying, agreed to find a bull. Word then came to Kamile (M) who notified the commoner priests of chief Mwalinja (1918) and sent a message to the priests of Lubaga. Kamile (M), together with three other priests of Selya (Mwakikoma, Nyoma, Mwenakombe) and Godfrey Wilson, set off early one morning from Kamile's house to take the bull (brown streaked with black, called ngombe ishibi) to Lubaga. On the way they called in at Mwenae's house, where the Kinga stop on their journey to pour a libation of beer (cf. p. 41). Kamile asked Mwenae, 'Shall the bull enter?' and he replied, 'Yes, let it come into the house', so it was tied up inside while the party talked with Mwenae. He was sick and did not want to accompany them. The others pressed him, and at last he refused. Whereupon Mwakikoma said: 'Very well, then, we are at your place, let the bull return and we will go another day', in other words, refusing to go without him. 'No, that is taboo,' said Kamile, 'once the bull has faced towards Lubaga and entered a house here it is taboo for it to turn back. The shades will be angry.' And so Mwenae went with them.

On the way they passed a group of men hoeing land. One of them called out: 'Where are you going with that bull? Where are you off enjoying yourselves?' 'Ai, you fellow,' answered Kamile, 'do you ask where we are going? We visit where our fathers always did.' They understood at once. 'Oh thank you, thank you,' they cried. 'Yes,' went on Kamile, 'do you call that work? Are you growing your own food? No, you lie still and eat without effort. It is we who must somehow fee you' (implying

St. Albans E-3 (1934-1935) 1939
F3017 Sgrondo F3017
Syracuse

[facing p. 34]

G. Wilson E.1 (1924-1931) 1929
FMU Ngumbo FMU
Nyakyusa

643 very oldest fled from his approach. Even in speech fearful circumlocutions were used to refer to his journeying—'The country is on the move'—'the great hill is moving'—'the mystery is coming'. It was taboo both for the old men who stayed to see him, and for those who entered the sacred enclosure, even to greet him in the usual way. Falling down and clapping the hands was the only greeting for the Kyungu.

From the wives of the Kyungu also men fled in terror, fearing lest they be compromised and thrown over the cliff of Mbande, and this both added to the atmosphere of terror which surrounded him and was an expression of it.

Of the effects of personal relationships upon public events we heard much less in Ngumbo than in Selya, for we lived there for a much shorter period, but there were indications that, as in Selya, public misfortune was traditionally attributed to quarrels between the nobles of Mbande and within the family of the [75] Kyungu. One fearful drought was thought to have been caused by the exile of Kyungu's son, Mwakasungula,[1] and men tell how the rain came down in torrents on his return. The nobles also asserted their power of calling on the shades of the Kyungu to [74] punish him when he did wrong, and rebuking him ever here telling him, 'It was we who caused you to be ill, don't do it again'. Since he was killed by his nobles if he really fell ill their power over him was incontestable.

(d) PULUNDULA

718 Pulundula is a cave at the north-east corner of Lake Nyasa
719 where sacrifices are made to the lion, Kyala (a). It is on the border between Nyakyusa, Ku, and Kinga country; the chiefs are Nyakyusa, but of Kinga extraction,[2] while many of the commoners are Ku. Nyakyusa is generally spoken as the first language, Ku as the second, and Nyakyusa, Kinga, and Ku all sacrifice to Kyala. As indicated in the myth already quoted (*vide supra*, p. 6) the location of the shrine has changed from one cave to another; according to one version, Kyala was driven out by Kanyosya; according to another, 'the Lake rose and roared and destroyed all the men in the cave and the cave was burnt in the mountains by the Kinga' and after that Kyala moved.

● 715 The ritual differs from that at Lubaga and Mbande in that

[1] Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngumbo*, p. 46.
[2] They are now of the Kinga of Lwangwa.

Kyala has no living representative—in the myth he had no descendants—but only a priest. However, the priest is sometimes referred to as 'Kyala' as were the early missionaries who preached about Kyala.[1] The present priest (1938) is a young man who, by his own account, would be a Christian were it not for his public responsibility in providing food for the country. His grandfather, Mwalikiyuma, was a Kisi who came as an immigrant doctor from Bulaglia in Kisi country to the south, and was the first of his family to hold office at PalliKyala. Before that the chiefs of the line of Mwongwa themselves celebrated the ritual. According to Mwongwa's descendant, the present chief Mwantala, 'When planted food and the crops failed, but when "the owner of food" (Mwalikiyuma) came with many medicines it grew, there was much food in the homesteads, hence we said: "Kyala has indeed loved this man, let us give him the duty of sacrificing", so the chiefs gave him cattle of his own and said: "Let the ritual come out of our bodies and go to Mwalikiyuma."[2] It was Mwalikiyuma who (according to his grandson) introduced a variety of crops—beans, maize, sorghum and groundnuts—to the people of Bemba; before that they grew only bananas and eleusine,[3] so the myth of the hero who brought benefits is linked to the new line of priests. But there is no tradition that the priest of Mwongwa's line ever was a 'divine king' like the Lwembe and the Kyungu.

Those who sacrifice at PalliKyala are the local chiefs (descendants of Mwongwa), the Kings chiefs Mwalikiyuma and Kyala (to whom Mwongwa was related), and various chiefs of the Nyakyusa plain as far west as Mwaisaki (see) near Merere. The Kings priests bring luxurious beer, bees, sheep, and occasionally goats or cattle; the local people offer white fowls, flour, cattle, and, traditionally, pots, which are produced in quantity near by, and which were being sold at the market at Bemba when the Europeans first arrived in the country.[4] The Nyakyusa of the plain and black (or black and white) cattle and sheep. According to the Kings priests they themselves offer black animals to the Kings when they want rain—black clouds—and white animals when they want sun and a clear sky. At Lubaga only dark animals are offered, but at PalliKyala white fowls and black, or white (or

[1] O. Dahlmann, Die Sprache Ufipas und Nachbargebiete, p. 317.

[2] Allgemeine Angaben zu Bemba, but there it is connected with Kyala (spelled).

[3] Joseph Thomson, To the Central African Lakes and Back (1881), v. 1, pp. 280-2. The missionary Dr. A. Hetherwick also describes such sacrifices, as well as gods, on the hills of the area: A. Hetherwick, op. cit., p. 300.

St William R-S (1534-1551) 1959
F907 Ngondo F907
Nyakyusa

[792] black and white) animals be killed, with the same symbolism as
[793] in Bufiloga.' 'We kill a white sheep in the dry season that the
[794] sun may shine—if we killed a black sheep in summer the wet season would last all the year.'

The Kings pray for fertility of the fields, that there may rain, that they 'may sleep at home'; the local people[1] for fertility of the fields and that the pots they make (and on the sale of which they largely depend) may not crack in the firing. The more famous sacrifices of the Nyakyusa plain sacrifice only in drought or plague—the last sacrifice remembered was during a plague of locusts about 1913, but the Kings chief Kyelala sent a cow to Fukkwale in July 1931.

[795] [796] Like the grave of Lufingo, Kyala's cave is fearful. There is a story of two men who took a length of creeper from near it to tie up their canoe, and when they got home both went mad. Godfrey Wilson's guide, a young Christian, refused to enter the cave on the grounds that his pagan half-brother had once entered and taken away a pendent and 'when he got home he went mad'.

[797] [798] [1] Normally appears to have been established on the point at A, as given.
[2] The priests are primarily Fuki, but neighbouring Nyakyusa have also to the Lwanira cave.

[643] separate inheritance sometimes went through the ritual because he might have to succeed as a chief, and the son of a conquered chief who had retained limited authority over a small area might be permitted to 'come out' with his senior brothers also. The common pattern, then, was for two sons to 'come out' as principals, but for a variety of reasons one or more 'younger brothers' might join them.

In Ngonde, as opposed to Ba'Nyakyusa, several brothers normally went through the ritual as principals and the reason given to me was that power should be distributed. They would say, we were told, 'If we bring out only two they will be beautiful and ill-use their people, so there be many therefore, then, if a man has a quarrel with his chief, he can flee to another ....' In Ba'Nyakyusa any tendency to tyranny in a chief was effectively curbed by his village headmen; but it is possible that headmen never had as much power in Ngonde as they did in Ba'Nyakyusa.

[644] An analysis of the genealogies of Nyakyusa chiefs shows that very often one half-brother has power to the other, but occasionally several brothers (e.g. seven sons of Mwaipopo 2E) get independent chiefdoms, and a junior brother (e.g. Mwakyusa 3E) might attract a larger following of men than his seniors. Mwakyusa led his men from the hills to the more fertile plain and drove out the Kyungu of Ngonde from the lake-shore north of the Songwe river.

[645] The 'coming out' was traditionally the occasion when authority was handed over by the older generation to the younger. The old chief retired and he was expected to die shortly. In Nyakyusa theory he died because his men no longer loved him: 'A chief did not live long after the "coming out" of his sons; he died because there was war and people would complain: "He is too old, when we fight we are beaten, he had better die, perhaps the heir will help us." He died of the "breath of men".' But, as will be shown, his headmen had the duty of smothering a chief who seemed likely to die, and they were much more ready to do this after the 'coming out' of his sons than before. It was right that the sons should come out before their father's death, but not right that the period of emergency should be extended, for the division of authority between old and young was uneasy. When the old chief did die his headmen became the private (abapapi) responsible for the succession to his graves, and the young men were solely responsible for the defence of the country and the administration of justice.

St Wilson G-S (1934-1955) 1959
F3617 Ngonde F3617
Nyakyusa

[64] ...ommunity and was buried dead, and no human was buried with him, yet they buried a live cow with him in imitation of the custom of the senior, because the junior was also a chief, and the cow was like a person. And now in European times the ruling chiefs are buried with a cow, not with a man, in imitation of the custom of the *juniors*; but still they are buried at night.

Kasitile denied that chiefs were buried before death, but he admitted that they were smothered.

[70] When the chief was very ill we priests came, Njobakwa and Ngulye, and I. We took his nails and his hair, we tore them off while he was still alive, he started up and we hid ourselves that he should not see us. Then we attended to him.

Here he made a gesture of stopping up the nostrils. That is, they hastened his death as soon as the nails and hair had been stripped off.

And we dug the grave; we buried him by night, when he had died, when he had gone, with a live cow; we did this at night for it was taboo for people to see the burial of a senior chief. We killed a cow in the sacred grove and we ate it, we the priests, before people heard that he had died. The chief Mwakagile (73) when his death was approaching said: 'My body is sick.' After waiting two days, the village headmen said, 'This illness has delivered us', and they tore off his nails—yes, before he died. If they had waited until after his death, would not the *ifingolo*, the power of chiefdomship, have passed away? But they did not smother him, he just died. . . . His nails and hair were put into a little mud, which they hid beneath an umuli (*Cheplanea cordata*) tree at the village headman's, the *umuli* which grew at the homestead of Njobakwa [the grandfather of the present Njobakwa]. They buried it at a commoner's place, as if to say: 'We commoners are the earth, we have taken the power of growth (*ifingo*) from the chief, those nails and the hair are the power of growth of the country (*Gula fia misili fye ifingo fye fima*).

Kasitile took Godfrey Wilson's hand and explained: 'Because, Mwaipaja (G.W.), when you cut those nails of yours do they not grow again?' 'Yes, they grow again.' 'Well, then, where does their growth come from? Does it not come from the body?' 'Yes.' 'Well, so it is, the village headmen take the power of growth (*ifingo*) from the chief, his nails and his hair.'

On another occasion Kasitile explained that formerly the relics had been kept in a pot in the house, but that when Mwaipopo (148) succeeded

As we have seen, the chief's fearsome medicine *ipyilolo* is thought to be very dangerous, and too much in the tails may cause them 'to fly about throttling men and cattle', but a chief is never accused of working witchcraft; it is inconceivable to the Nyakyusa that he could be. If the tails have got out of hand they are treated by a doctor 'to close them up'; no one suggests that the chief should get rid of them. It is commoners, 'black people', who are witches —cannibals, the eaters of raw flesh—as opposed to chiefs who, since the dawn of history, have killed cattle for meat and cooked their food like civilized men. But the distinction does not extend very far; junior kinsmen of the chief are 'commoners' and may well be accused of practising witchcraft.

There was a delicate balance of power in the Nyakyusa constitution between hereditary chief and commoner headmen and the belief in the power of medicines and of witchcraft was an integral part of it. The chief provided fruitfulness by the power of his own body and his medicines; all men depended upon him for their well-being—food, cattle, children, success in war; but he in his turn depended upon the goodwill of his men led by their village headmen; without it he shivered and fell ill, only to be buried by them 'with the breath still in his body' lest the power of growth disappear with his breathless corpse.

Something of the quality of this mutual dependence and fear is conveyed in Kasitile's account of his own illness quoted in Chapter VIII.

(*a*) THE NECESSITY FOR HARMONY

The welfare of the chiefdom is thought to depend upon harmony between the chief and his village headmen and priests, and also between the chief and his kinsmen. Any friction between them may result in public misfortune as well as sickness to the individual at fault. The quarrel of Kasitile, the priest, first with the Kinga priests, and then with the commoner priests of Mwaipopo's chiefdom was believed to affect the crops and the weather, as well as Kasitile's own health (*vide infra*, pp. 124-41), and Mwaipopo's failure to tell Kasitile formally of the death of their kinsman led to rain which spoiled the funeral dance. A quarrel between the lineages of two chiefs which should have sacrificed together was said to have been followed by a very poor millet crop (*vide infra*, pp. 79-80, 118, 136).

How the personal relationship of a chief with his kinsmen is

Wilson E.S (1934-1951) 1959
FNU Ngonda FNU
Nyakyusa

for planting, but now all the fields are muddy, we can neither hoe nor plant.' Five days ago there was no rain but locusts, and people did not plant for fear lest the locusts should eat the rice and ruine as it sprouted. Kimondo tells me: 'Kyala is very angry. . . . Mwandisi (107), the priest-chief) wants to pray to put things right, he has sent Mwalilolowya to ask Mwakisisile (170, the ruling chief) for a cow. Mwalilolowya and Mwakisile went and the chief agreed saying: "I have not got one now, but I will look for one!" Then Mwalilolowya sent me (Kimondo) to fetch it, but the chief refused saying: "I am busy now." Then Mwandisi (107), who is blind and infirm, went himself, but still there is no cow.'

The priests who minister to dead chiefs, like the priests of Lufingo, are of different types. The senior village headman of a dead chief are responsible for conducting sacrifices at his grave in co-operation with his heir, and when a headman dies his office is taken over by his heir. Where a grave is much honoured this continues for generations and the heirs of one of the village headmen become hereditary keepers of the grave, each incumbent of the office assuming his name. Secondly, there are chiefs of a junior line, who become hereditary priests on whom the ruling chiefs depend for their prayers, but these priest-chiefs do not actually attend the sacrifices; the celebration is delegated to commoner priests and junior kinsmen. Mwandisi (107) mentioned above, Kasitile (66) and Nsambo (50) were all priest-chiefs of this sort. Kasitile prayed at his own home, blowing out water before any celebration in Mwaipopo's country, and he was given the chine of any animal sacrificed on behalf of the country. If this were not done 'all the cattle in the country would die . . . it is the most important part of the meat'. The commoner priests who conducted the ritual always shared the head of the sacrificial beast and the breast went to the chief. With priest-chiefs, as with commoner chiefs, the name of the first incumbent of the office (or an early and famous incumbent) may become a hereditary title, e.g. three generations of priests in Selya have been known as *Kasitile*.

The essential elements in the ritual are: the sacrifice of a black bull or cow in the grove; the offering up of the blood and pieces of the sacred meat from the forelegs, together with the beer, on the earth close to a sacred stone and near a sacred tree; an invocation calling on the shades to come and feast, and petitions for rain, fertility, and health. One piece of meat is thrown down for

I kept the chief for two nights in my house. The shades came to eat—they left practically nothing. Had I not been ill I would have asked you to come and we could show you my duty do not eat. . . . The shades come and see that we are celebrating the rituals.

The whole ritual was masonic. Only the chief with eight of his legitimate kinsmen, four of his young sons (but not his grown-up heir or young grandson), and four private participants, and we two anthropologists were permitted to look on. Peeping small boys were chased off. The shades were addressed in a conventional tone and, except during the invocation, the priests and chiefs chatted to one another, but arguments and raised voices were taboo. The boys who ate the meat were told:

Son, as your fathers are sacrificing, we are making glossy of food. Follow the custom of your fathers when it is your turn to sacrifice. Learn how to do it.

The same evening Kasiibi prayed at his tree again. He explained:

I would not usually pray at all tonight, it is finished. Mwaipopo and I prayed yesterday, today the ritual is finished, but that boy of mine [his heir, 115] does not visit me, he's not been to see me and he did not tell me that he was going to the ritual. . . . I am going to pray to tell my fathers not to be startled, to tell them I am not angry, to tell them to send only a little rain, not a lot, to tell them to accept the sacrifice.

He went to the same place, and chewed the root of 'blessed grass' and blew out water as before. He prayed to almost thirty persons, especially to Mwamalehe (8), his elder brother) and Mwakanjoki (60, his father), and also to Mwakaglo (33), Mwaijenga (82), Mwaipopo (82), Mwakabolo (113), Mwamwila (84), Mwalenga (83), Mwakipesile (118), Mwakapala (?), Lyambiko (16), Mwalehenge (38), Mwamukinga (43), Mwalinja (142?), Mwaisenda (60), and Kyala (2). No mention was made of the Lalanga chiefs this time, *or of none of Mwaipopo* (82) *or of 'Jesus'*.

You have received your child Mwakaglo (118, identified with his grandfather 33), Mwaijenga (82), you have received the chief, this boy of mine (113) is quarrelling with me, do not be upset, he is a fool, a fool, but let him be . . . go and call your brothers to eat, you Mwaijenga (82), you Mwaipopo (113), and all your younger brothers; call Mwakaglo (33) and Mwakanjoki (60) . . . Mwalehenge (38) go to eat with your younger brother, let us find food, millet, bananas, children, milk . . . let there be a little rain only, not too much . . . people believe

that I can speak, that what I speak had come tomorrow; let it be so.

These points call for comment here. First, it will be noted that if the cows failed Kaitilo had a scapegoat in his hair who was quarrelling with him. The sacrifice was performed correctly but a quarrel between any of the leading actors could destroy its efficacy, and Kaitilo made it clear that he was being very forbearing with a difficult 'ass'.

Secondly, a great many names were mentioned in the prayers, but they were not mentioned in any discernible order. This is obvious if the prayers are compared with the genealogy facing p. 9 And since Kaitilo was a famous priest, acknowledged to be an expert in ritual and tradition we must conclude that the order was not thought important: all that was required was to mention the names of dead members of the lineage, including even one (Mwakabolo [17]) who was junior both to Mwaipopo and Kaitilo who were sacrificing.

Thirdly, what did Kaitilo imply by his reference to the moon? (p. 79). We omitted to ask Kaitilo himself, but a number of informants insisted that there is no necessary connexion between the celebration of a ritual and the phases of the moon. However, rain is expected with the waning moon, therefore rituals which are intended to produce rain are usually performed with the waning moon, and the sacrifice to Mwaipopo in which sun and warmth were sought, was performed with the waxing moon. This may or may not be what Kaitilo had in mind.

Everyone agreed afterwards that the rituals had been effective for the weather grew slightly warmer. Before the sacrifice at Lufanga on 7th July, the temperature was 61° F. at noon, but from the 9th onward the cloud cleared, and by the 14th the noon temperature was 68° F. Whether or not the Kings priests living high on their mountains with a view down the Lake whereas storms come are weatherwise, and time their visits carefully, we do not know. Certainly any change in the weather after a celebration is interpreted as a direct answer to prayer.

(c) SACRIFICE TO MWAMLAMBWE

A month later a sacrifice was made to Mwaipopo's great-great-grandfather Mwalimambwe (31) in the grove Miyonge. The chief Mwaipopo was not concerned this time, but the senior line of Mwalimpo (14) and a junior line who had traditionally the responsibility of providing cows for celebrations at Miyonge.

[illegible] CONSERVATIVE ATTITUDE OF THE MYANMAS

[illegible] Mwalukasu, the hereditary priest of Mbwanga, had been pressing the chiefs to sacrifice for some time. He had sent messengers in March, April, May, and again in July, saying: 'Do Mbwanga things have gone back, is it bad, are hunger kills?' At last, in August, Mwalinja agreed to provide a cow if Mwalumbi of the junior line (only related, Mwalukasu, the priest of the grove, explained):

[79] We went to Mwalumbi [sic, identified with his grandfather (?)] and asked him to sacrifice. He said: 'No, I am not coming; do the work here at Mbwanga yourselves.' We said: 'Why do you refuse to come, to return a cow? Our grandfathers gave you a cow, why don't you return it? They gave you cows on the understanding that you would bring them back, one by one, and kill them in the sacred grove here. Why do you refuse to return them?' It has always been the custom for the junior brothers to find cows for sacrifice. Their seniors give them credit and appoint them priests to bring cattle to the sacred grove.

[77] But in Ramposi [sic] they refuse to come, each man kills at his own place. . . . I must go and tell Kasitile (M) and also Kilindu, as rather he sees—the latter refuses to come he had a lawsuit with Kasitile . . . Kilindu used to kill the cow, then Kasitile said Mabuli should kill the cow, but now Mabuli has refused to come so I go to fetch Kilindu [the younger]. Mabuli was a chief who ate the meat. . . . Mwalumbi (M) used to send the cow to him and Mwalumbi to bring to Mbwanga . . . or he now refuses to send the cow they say: 'What should we bring?' and have refused to come here.

[32] There had been another spell of cold weather and the temperature on the night of 8th August was down to 39° F., but the weather was visibly approaching from the Lake. On the 9th the ritual was to have been held, but not everyone had been formally summoned and it was put off to the 10th.

[78] Only eight men came, Mwalukasu I, the priest of the grove, and his younger brother Mwalukasu II, two other priests (Myama and Mwalumbulu) and Mwakyondo [right], younger brother of Mwalinja the chief who provided the cow, and three other young men of the chief's lineage. One of the young chiefs was

[29] wearing a red cloth and was scolded by Mwakyondo for doing so: 'It's taboo in the sacred grove.' 'Why?' 'Because it's like a rainbow.'[1] And he took it off.

The mother of Myama brought a bundle of saplings for building the hut for the shade, and Kisale, the senior wife of Mwalinja the

[1] The rainbow is a symbol of misfortune, cf. p. 6n.

9: Wilson B-S (1934-1935) 1959
FHIT Ngonde FHIT
Nyakyusa

prince to sacrifice to his father and elder brother so that fertility may return and men may not sweat profusely, but he does nothing.

A conversation between Kaitila and Mwanyasa, his fellow priest (*vide* p. 76), was also instructive on this point:

> The soil has changed, we are not like those of old, we are different. Mwakisambwe (p1) had power; when he prayed the thunder crashed and rain fell in torrents. In the old days when the Kings came they came with drums and we all feared them, what they said was done—they did not have to say much—just a few words and it was done. But now they spend all their time explaining things and talking and we do not do anything. . . .
>
> Mwanyasa: I have seen people time and again to Mwajisale (?) for a cow, but he just insults us. . . . I have asked Mwalugo (p2) about ritualising. . . .
>
> Kaitila: What did he say?
>
> Mwanyasa: I don't know . . . If he is wise . . .
>
> Kaitila (*breaking in*): Well, you had better admit that the chiefs do not respect you—the chiefs say: 'It is European times now.'
>
> G.M.: What do they fear? The Government does not affect the ritual, does it?
>
> Kaitila: They are unwilling to part with the cows which I take for sacrifice, they do not like to lose their cows. In the old days they feared, and when we said: 'We do not digg, celebrate in the grave', they agreed quickly, for they feared that we, their sons, would move to another chiefdom.

(f) THE FIRST FRUITS

The communal ritual of the first fruits is celebrated among the Nyakyusa as in Ngonde,[1] but after the millet harvest a little grain is collected from every homestead and later brewed into beer which is offered to the shades of the chief. In Mwaipopo's country the offerings of millet were collected by the priest, Ngulyo, who, with his colleagues Kinegesa and Nyakabona, took it to Kalinga, senior widow of the late chief (115). She was custodian of a sacred pot inherited by the chief from his predecessors, in which the offerings of millet are stored, and this is the pot which, according to some informants, also contained the power of growth—the nails and hair torn from the dead chief (*vide supra*, pp. 64-5). When the new crop was reaped Kalinga almost emptied the pot, refilled it with the fresh grain, and brewed beer with the old. There had once been a sacred winnowing basket used in preparing the beer, but

[1] Godfrey Wilson, *The Constitution of Ngonde*, p. 40.

Nyakyusa, where one of them was continued in the grove of a dead chief such as Mwakilembelwa (91), for an indefinite number of generations, and the heirs of his senior village headmen serve as his priests, taking the name of the first holder of the office. Most of the priests of Lubaga hold perpetual titles of this sort. The conception of the corporation sole is familiar enough in the western tradition, but European observers in Africa are sometimes confused by the use of a personal name and the almost complete identification of each holder with his predecessors, as well as by the practice of treating certain kinship relationships as if they were offices.

Generation was determined among the Nyakyusa by association with a chief. There was no name for those who 'came out' together other than that of their chief, who was the focus of the ritual. On the other hand, however, a 'coming out' concerned a whole generation, and it could not be held out of season. If the heir died he was replaced by a brother, as were Mwaipopo I (103) and Mwankuga I (190). If a chief had no male heir of the right age in his senior house his daughter might represent an heir. For example, at the coming out of the sons of Mwaijonga, it was a girl Ijonga (104) who performed the leading part in the ritual which fell due before the birth of Mwaipopo I (103). When Mwaipopo I was born and grew up he assumed office, but he died young and was replaced by his younger brother without a further celebration. Because the 'coming out' was thus linked to the maturity of a whole generation we have felt some confidence in assigning approximate dates to the arrival of the heroes. The period between each 'coming out' we estimate at thirty to thirty-five years, though the higher figure is probably more nearly correct. There must in fact have been some flexibility in the timing of the 'coming out' to account for the differences in the number of generations of ruling chiefs in different segments of the lineage. Some of the differences may be due to errors (e.g. it is possible that 70 is an elder brother not the father of 98, and that a generation has been omitted between Mwakapoja (54) and Mwakaoga (73)), but even where there is little possibility of error the number of generations does not always tally.

In theory a man always belongs to the generation succeeding that of his father, irrespective of his age, provided he has not inherited from a man of the previous generation and taken his status, but in practice, since men often have sons of very different

ordinance means that a limited number of young men are [42]
orbed into the senior generation and live with the older men, [54]
ving their activities and from time to time holding office as [42]
ldmen or priests of that generation, and the selection to such [6.47]
neration of young men who are not the sons of village headmen, [6.52]
ldmen, or headmen of the past generation, ensures that com-
mon without office are constantly recruited to the hierarchy of
em. In short, power is distributed.

(c) RITUAL AND SECULAR POWER

he is at many societies, economic and ritual links extended, [43]
ditionally, further than political links.[1] Selya were dependent [48.2]
on Bulungu for iron and the Kings came to fruitful Selya to
y for fertility. The priests who came to pray brought the iron.
e many independent chiefdoms of Selya and the Mbaka valley [6.42]
nowledged the spiritual overlordship of the Lucombe by
ding sacrifices to him, and it was through the network of [79.5]
ordinary priests like Kaitile, Mwamalimbi, Mwalisham, and
ame of Selya, and the Kings priests Kibungulaja, Nyungwe,
mutha Kitali, and Silalwike that wider bonds were maintained.
wanjaya [7.61] when he was granted a Court which gave him
secular leadership of Selya, failed to make any acknowledge-
ts of Lucombe's traditional power, and it was Kaitile who
s urged him to do so. The women chiefdoms of the Nyakyusa [4.16]
d buy medicines and bark-cloth from the Ndali to the west, and
ve done so for many generations, but no common ritual links [6.4]
em as it does Selya and the plain with Bulungu. The trade was of [6.26]
ore importance than that to the east, for it does not seem to
ve included iron, though the Nyika who share a common [5.24]
ture with the Lambya, the western neighbours of the Nyakyusa,
known to have been skilled smiths.[2] With the Songo to the [7.2]

[1] cf. E. Colson, 'The Plateau Tonga of Northern Rhodesia' in *Seven Tribes of Central Africa* (ed. Colson and Gluckman).
A comparison with the frontier in West and South Africa where economic and religious expansion compelled the establishment of Government is instructive. Cf. K. Hancock, *Survey of British Commonwealth Affairs*, vol. ii, part ii, pp. 160 ff.

[2] D. Kerr-Cross, 'Geographical Notes on the Country between the Lakes Nyasa, Rukwa, and Tanganyika', *The Scottish Geographical Magazine*, vi (1890), p. 289. Duff's suggestion that some of the Nyakyusa iron came from the west is discounted by Consul J. F. Elton, *The Lakes and Mountains of Eastern and Central Africa* (1879), p. 371 and map; cf. J. Thompson, *To the Central African Lakes and Back*, vol. i, p. 230.

[illegible]

[illegible]

Mwanilisi made a great deal of the fact that at the 'throwing out of the rubbish' the village headmen are most use.

[illegible] we throw away the ashes and charred brands . . . that to drive away the shades who were themselves over the hearth in houses; they bring no sickness, for those were themselves over us in the long grass! Also in the long grass there we killed game, if the priests eat it not: no one saw there doing that there in the long grass; we went by day with drums, people from all the homesteads, a moving multitude . . . then we came home . . . the priests anointed with their wives, they threw away their back-sticks, they put off mantels of moss and we threw two. Because the priests are sickness it is they who are now many before we shall come, the priests are witches. . . . The witches and shades gather and bring sickness together, we kill a cow in the grove, we drive them away. We, they do not see many in the grove, they cook it. But as the capital if the priest has killed a cow for ours to eat the priests eat many now. We have no them. I, Mwanilisi, have seen Mwanjale and Kalombo the senior village headmen eating raw meat at my place and my wives have seen me also.

'Eat', said one of his wives, 'we saw them and we run away crying: "Wild! Fancy doing it openly!"' Mwanilisi continued:

e senior village headmen are witches, children of those who are now d long ago. Some village headmen only rush to eat a cow we have lled, but some go to eat a person; those are the witches who eat raw en!

e function of a child is to feed his mum on beef, and in doing so placates the witches who are consumers and who, like their children, prefer their meat raw. If they do not get beef then the witches eat mum.[1]

(c) [illegible]

The prayer and 'clearing out of the rubbish', traditionally followed before an approaching epidemic, was described by an [illegible] Christian, Filemba. It illustrates very clearly the combination of practical precaution—isolation—and magical purification, and also the idea that sickness was brought into the country by witches.

[illegible] the chief had heard that smallpox was coming, or dysentery, he [illegible], 'Let us pray'. Before my baptism I saw it, in the country of the

[1] cf. Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 30-4.

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[Facing p. 118]

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CHAPTER IX

KASITILE THE PRIEST

We have now seen the description of rituals to a personal dema- [793]
nent, an account of the illness of Kasitile (90), the leading priest [795]
of Selya, the cause suggested for it, and the rituals performed.
We saw above: (i) the power of village headmen over chiefs in
general, more particularly the power of the commoner priests [550]
(village headmen of the previous generation) over hereditary
priests of the chief's lineage; (ii) the prominent linking of misfortune [681]
with sin in both public and private life; (iii) the function of [787]
divination in electing between possible causes of disease; (iv)
the influences of Christian and Muslim teaching and Western [797]
medical science on a conservative who goes so far as to invite a
Muslim to cut the throat of the sacrificial animal and speaks of [771]
turning Christian in his old age; and (v) the very great importance
attached to 'breaking out' (ukunyipi) and our leaving anger to [673]
smoulder unredressed. Beer is necessary for such a ritual 'speaking
out' and the participants are pressed to drink deep, for to abs-
stain.

The *demonic persons* are:

Kasitile (90) of the chief's lineage, priest of Selya [951]
[see his senior and favourite wife
[see's younger sister and co-wife
Kasitile's third wife suspected of bewitching Kasitile [719]
Mwaisumo (116) the chief and senior kinsman of Kasitile
Mwaisumo (148) the doctor who was treating Kasitile
Kasitile priests (i.e. Kikongoleja Nayaaigwa, Kyamba Kitali, *vide* pp. 69-74)

Nyakyusa Nyamwaya Kasitile — Village headmen of Mwaijonga (81) and priests of his grove, *vide* pp. 741, 845

Mwaisumo the elder a hereditary priest, assistant to Kasitile
Mwaisumo the younger (Mwasilagejo) son of the elder who often acted in his place

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[753] Nyangwa
[755] Ngwa
[757] Ngwa
[759] A Luswa
Names of kinsmen of Kaniki

Divisions consulted by Kaniki

[753] It will be remembered that, in accordance with the custom of delegating ritual functions to a junior line, Kaniki's grandfather (ng) had been appointed rain-maker and priest responsible for receiving the Kings when they came to sacrifice at Lubaga. Kaniki thus held an important public office. He was living on the plain (where he had inherited the estate of his father's younger brother) where his own elder brother (by) died and he came up onto Selya to bury him and succeed to his position. But he failed to notify the Kings priests of his brother's death and they were very angry, and told him he would die if he stayed in the homestead, so he fled back to the plain. There he fell ill, and he was carried back to Selya to be treated by the visiting Kings priests, who told him he was sick 'because he went to the plain in a hurry and they had not given him medicine'. The idea here is that the heir to a chief or priest must cultivate the power that was in his father's body by drinking medicines: Kaniki was 'losing the *jingole* of his father by not drinking medicines'. Now *jingole* implies both the medicines of chieftainship and the power which they create in the body of a man.

[757]

[758]

So Kaniki was treated and we quote his own account of what happened:

> The Kings came to cook medicine by the tree where I pray—it is where the cattle byre of my elder brother was. They put some medicine for Jane [his senior wife] and me in beer . . . and we drank together . . . and they boiled medicines in a pot and told us both to wash with the infusion every day for two months. I found a goat and called the priests Ngulyo, Njelukoma, and Kinegete and . . . they and the Kings priests ate the meat together, and they told me to stay for two months and return to the plain again, and so I did. Then the Kings sent for me to come back and I've come up to live. I found a cow, and called the priests and killed it at the sacred grove, Kinyangwa, and all the people ate the meat. Then the Kings told me to move to my father's old homestead, and I did so this very year.

[765]

[753] Before we arrived, therefore, Kaniki had been in conflict with his fellow priests, and he had been very ill, and attributed his

illness to neglect of his duty to the Kings. All the time we were in Buffumbyene he was ailing—unwilling to suffered from taboo-sickness—and one wrongdoing after another was suggested as the cause of his illness.

His case is intelligible only in terms of the conception of 'the breath of men', that is, a power akin to witchcraft thought to be legitimately exercised by village headmen and others to punish wrongdoers, but which is reflected to by the victims as 'witchcraft'. This has been discussed at length elsewhere.[1]

On 2nd July 1935, Kasitile had left his own home and was living with a friend in a neighbouring village. His doctor, Mwaiyombe, said that he was being 'thrusted by the witches' and had invited him to come and swallow himself (*shinjitilanya*) in the tranquillity of a village of another chieftaincy in which there were many people with spiritual power (*shamanga*) so that 'the witches' could not get at him. This is a common precaution in case of illness, for witches are thought not to have power ordinarily outside their own village and never beyond the chieftaincy.[2]

The cause of the illness was explained as follows: Kasitile had quarrelled with Kisogera, the commoner priest, and others of the principal men of the country, because he had found them drinking the sacred beer (*shasikome*), brewed after the millet harvest (*ubwiya*, pp. 84-5) without telling him, or sending him the pot which was his due. They invited him to drink, but he refused and they each sent him 1s. to beg pardon. Kasitile bought beer with one of the shillings and called the senior commoner priest, Ngulye, and his fellows to drink saying, 'I was angry, friends, you "overstepped" me' (*i.e.* they had ignored his rights). He himself should have brewed when he confirmed his anger, and slaughtered a calf or prepared food for them as well, but he had bought only one shilling's worth of beer and provided nothing himself. Then, when they had drunk, Kasitile fell ill. Hence it was said that the commoner priests were angry and 'ate' (*i.e.* bewitched) him. Kasitile's own comment was: 'The fault lies with the young priests (Ngulye, a young man, had inherited his father's position), they are useless as priests . . . I was not told of that ritual beer, yet the medicine comes from me, from this house where I keep it. They should have come to me to get it and put it with the millet in the holy pot. They drank the beer without medicine. It is they who have brought cold and hunger on the country. I think the

[1] Monica Wilson, *Good Company*, pp. 91-101, 1951. [2] *op. cit.*, pp. 100-3.

visible is that Mwanjapo [the chief 148] is getting old. . . .' Here Kaitila suggested two different causes for the scarcity in the country: (a) the negligence of the priests, and (b) the senility of the chief. In the old days Mwanjapo would have been sacrificed, as Jingambwiko explained (*vide supra*, p. 69).

On the 9th, Kaitila, much troubled by his cough at night, expressed a great desire for the return of the missionary nurse to Kalomba hospital. 'She is killing us by her slowness, the black people don't know anything about these things, only the European. Why, I went there and the dresser just gave me an injection without taking my temperature—no European ever does that.'

The following day he sent off his sons with 10/-, to inquire about his case from a diviner. The diviner said: 'The wives in his home are gossiping to other people about their husband. People want the husband's body to be light. It is not Jane, because she is his favourite, but the others.' Kaitila said:

> I don't do anything, I said 'Let's leave it.' I am still in Bundo [the village to which he moved for safety]. Mwanyumbi is giving me medicine for my disease. It drives out the cold which is in my body. Yes, the cold is the breath of the witches coming to throttle me—it's due to my wives' gossip. But it started as a quarrel with other people [non-relatives] first. One day I went to drink beer in Bujogo and that night I fell sick; that is how it began. Men are complaining because I, a chief, a senior, do not cook food for them. They throttle me on that account. They say: 'Let us see whether he is really a chief, a senior!' But others say: 'He has done no wrong.' Yes, the sickness took me on the way home from the beer. Perhaps Kyala asked: 'What has he done?' and found I had done no wrong. If there had not been a Kyala who knows us I would have been dead.
>
> When I consulted a diviner he struck a spear and looked along it, then he said: 'The disease now is from his wives—the earlier attack was from men, but this one is from his wives. When they gather at the hearth they say: "Come hither, we see him where he sleeps."'

'Are the wives witches?' we asked.
Kaitila replied:

> Yes. They say: 'There is a favourite, we are not beloved.' If a man's wives are good the witches can get into the house, but their cold breath dissipates quickly; you are given medicine and recover quickly; but if the wives are bad they gather together the medicine and pass it down, so that it is powerless. One of my wives is very bad, her lineage is bad, it is she who calls to her aid the heavy ones, the witches. The

[illegible] CONCERNING OFFICIALS OF THE SOCIETIES.

[illegible] closely inclined to the diviner as it had before the divination, but as before the certain conviction was lacking.

Four days later [illegible] Kantile came to Nama in Kindi village to consult the oracle again, for that of Nadi were wrong. He said afterwards 'The oracle supported the feeling of Nkandawe's. It said: Your kinsman who is dead is angry; he says, "Why did you not sacrifice the rituals? I am tired of the hair [Nyasa says small], find what did you offer your father after cutting that tree?"' Here we another case of Kantile's illness is suggested—the neglect of the death ritual of a kinsman. The implication is that the ritual omissions have not yet performed the comforting rite of shaving which makes it possible for the deceased to join his fathers. The hair which the mourners shave off is called 'the hair of the corpse'.

Question: What are you going to do then?

Answer: I shall charge the young man, son of my dead kinsman, with neglect, and tell him to withdraw the ritual that the diviner which have found on may go out of my body.

Question: And the bad?

Answer: If I can find one I shall kill it.

Question: Who will be there?

Answer: The priests will be there, Ngulwe, Kinguwa, Njelukwa, Mwalubwa and Mwakambaki,[1] and also Mwaipopo [illegible] himself. Were I a commoner I should kill alone with my younger brothers, for since I am a public personage [at chalimbe] the village headmen are there. (To Mwakambe, the clerk.) It is good at your home in the hills; here things are bad.

Question: But they also have diviners?

Answer: But they are not important. Look you, I just cut a tree and they have stood me and dwell in my body. Are there sacred groves in the hills? Do men visit them? There in the hills rituals have died; the puberty ritual and the rituals of the graves are celebrated very little.

On 27th March Kantile looked in to say that he was going to consult a visiting Songo doctor 'from very far off' about his cough, but G.W. had better not come but his presence spoil the divination. Kantile came again after the consultation, full of excitement. 'What a doctor! That is a doctor indeed! That is a diviner! He took an axe and divined with it; he took coppers which I brought and threw them in a little pot, together with the axe, and salt, and he said: "You also take salt and throw it in" and I did so. Then he looked into the little pot and said: "You built on the plain!" He knew this without being told! I said: "Yes".'

Answer: There was a quarrel there.

[1] The last two are priests of Mipango (cf. p. 8n) who did not in fact come. Mwanakwendo, Kantile's assistant, who did come is not mentioned.

9: Wilson G.-S (1934-1935) 1939
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some live coals into a small calabash and hold them against Kasitile's chest 'to clear out the blood of coughing'. To pacify the shades a pot of medicine to water was put on the fire; the doctor, Kasitile, and his senior wife (actually her younger sister, as [illegible]) each held the pot with a crooked finger. Then Kasitile and all his wives and children were sprinkled with the hot medicines. And the doctor told Kasitile to sacrifice a bull.

During the following week preparations for the sacrifice were ahead. Kasitile walked for some hours through the forest to call Mwamakundu, his fellow priest who always assisted him in the celebrations at Lubaga and 'sprinkling the country'. Mwamakundu is a very old man, contemporary of Kasitile's father, and he asked: 'Are you bringing your Europeans to the sacrifice?'

KASITILE: Yes.

MWAMAKUNDU: But your father Mwakanjiki (lit) did not know any Europeans, he feared them, he died without ever meeting one. After your father died, when your elder brother was alive, Europeans came —Germans—and cut down a tree, the smooth tree in the sacred grove near Kamema; blood gushed out, it shouted so that it was heard in Bulungu.

Kasitile explained that the Germans had wanted timber. Afterwards Mwaipopo (the chief [cf.]) sought a sheep and they tried to put the grove to rights ('clean up') by sacrificing it. This was the tree beside which the sacred stones was always put when they sacrificed in the grove. Now one branch has grown up again from the roots.

Mwamakundu went on: 'But you did wrong at the beginning not to take the European to pray, and to tell Mwakanjiki (lit) that he should not be afraid, the European has made himself our friend.' Kasitile, reporting the interview to us said: 'I consulted that we went together to the grove to pray [*vide supra*, p. 113] and Mwamakundu told me: "Let the European take something, let it stay overnight in the house, and go with him, and [pray very much. . . . Mwakanjiki has gone off in a huff from your home, you have offended him yourself. Go with the Europeans, take him to your father's home. Now your father has taken offence, he is shaking [your body by night because you cut the tree; you have done wrong."' [i.e. two causes for the anger of the shades and Kasitile's consequent sickness were given: (i) the cutting of the tree by Mwakanjiki's grove and (ii) Godfrey Wilson's presence at rituals and at Kasitile's homestead. So before the sacrifice of expiation for pruning the grove was performed Godfrey Wilson went to be introduced to Kasitile's shades for the second time.

Record of G.W. 3/4/37

In the evening as the sun was setting, I went to Kasitile's house with a cloth and so. He put them in the house, took down the calabash which

S. Wilson E-6 (1934-1955) 1959
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All the time there was a constant refrain of questioning, especially from Mwaambande [who as Kamtila's assistant acts as his mouthpiece to the others]: 'But why has Mwakanjoki (lit) gone off to a hill? Why?' There was a continuous effort to extract reasons. [78] 2.

The meat from the top of the loving (jimwapi) was cut up into little portions and some was put aside for the boys, sons of Kamtila. Then Kamtila led the way with a bill-hook and Mwaambande and I followed. Mwaambande carried the meat to a leaf. We went to the sacred grove, Kinyangwa. When we reached the edge Kamtila said as we went and he cut a path into the middle with the bill-hook, then we followed. [778]

Mwaambande threw the meat down, piece by piece, into the rotting stump of an old emani tree, from which a hairy growth had sprung, one piece being go fine high. Kamtila prayed: 'Come Mwakanjoki (lit), together with Lwamba (1?), Mwakalebela (1g), and the Kings, come, with—with—with—come. We pray of you sailor, canoe, harness, all your load.' (Mwaambande threw a piece of meat at each word.) 'We are still mourning you, we have tears. We finish now, that is all. Bring harness, bring sailor, canoe, children, away the cows calve, cared by us Mwakanjoki (lit), N—, N—, N— Lwamba (1?), Mwakalebela (1g), Nkyanigwe,[1] Kyamba Kisali,[1] Ngalaba (g), N—, N—, N—. Don't come again Mwakanjoki, let us sleep well. This is Mwaalaggje [i.e. Mwaambande the younger. It was his first visit to the sacred grove in place of his father]. I have brought him to you. Do not be startled at this Mwaipopo (G.M.), he is innocent, he is our friend. Move out of my body, let this chill go from my body! We have finished! Amen!' [744]

Kamtila and Mwaambande gave instructions and suggestions to each other in low voices from time to time during the prayer and throwing of the meat. We went out, Kamtila and Mwaambande looking ahead, and Kamtila warned me: 'Do not look behind, Mwaipopo.' For the next two days Kamtila said he and Mwaambande would wash with medicines, and refrain from intercourse with their wives 'because they entered the sacred grove'. [674]

Then we rejoined Mwaipopo and the priests and the meat was cut up. Mwaipopo said: 'Indeed people gossip, where does the whispering go? To whom do the words go? Perhaps they went to you (the commoner) priests?' Kamtila had something on his mind: 'When I returned from Lubaga who came to say: "Thank you, you have arrived back?" [i.e. no one came to greet him formally on his return]. Njobokwa answered this saying that no offence was meant. [687]

Then Njobokwa turned to Mwaipopo (116) and raised the question of his son, Mwaeba (136) who had seduced Mwaipopo's wife, Mpeta. [684]

[1] The hereditary Kings priests. [793]

Indeed from the whispering of men and the shades here, but people [757]
speak openly, saying: 'Why does he not celebrate the ritual?' The [776]
witches do not come into it.

Question: Well, when the witches do throttle someone, do they [753]
always call shades, or not?

Kaitila: No, sometimes they throttle a man alone, and the shades are not there.

Question: But your sickness?

Kaitila: Now the priests in their witchcraft gathered with the shades. [791]
The day after we had celebrated Nyakalowe came to my place and said: 'We have finished them!' I replied: 'Yes, my body is better now, but the cough is oppressive, it is from Kyelile.' And did you not hear what Mwaipopo asked in his rage—'How did the doctor (the Sango) know that you are a priest? And that you had done wrong? Indeed they (Kiwegete and his fellows, had told him!'

Question: What did he mean by that?

Kaitila: That they had gone to the doctor to denounce to tell him. [787]

Asked about Kiwegete's words: 'You are impressive, we are cannibals, we are', Kaitila explained: 'It means, "You climb kill cattle for us, you are impressive, that is your impressiveness. Do we kill cattle? But We eat men, we are witches." Because when we have killed cattle they receive blood, their witchcraft goes away, it stays in its house.'

Question: And your reply, 'You are impressive, you are'?

Kaitila: I replied: 'You are impressive, you are, you are witches, if I were alone what would I do? It is you who brought the chilling breath on me and said I had done wrong. Even though I have not done wrong, you wish to eat meat. If I walk about among you, my body shrinks, it frets.'

Mwaipopo (*the chief*: ed) had also prayed with water the night [782]
before the sacrifice, he helps me in prayer and if he prays at his house, I help him. We pray with water to bring out everything; if I do not [776]
pray with water then something is left within. I summon all the gods, [775]
all the fathers, and all the shades. (*Aba nakwipute nawesi ku kwenepo* [539]
diga lapa, longa nakwipute nawesi po kigala lima okati. Nilumpula kpaka gawa, tete gawa, akwpaka kwa.)

Question:

Kaitila: Yes, when Kiwegete and his fellows came in their witchcraft [787]
to call my shades to their aid, I saw them in dreams, I saw them! And if they correct Mwaipopo like this in witchcraft, together with the shades, he sees them; he complies immediately, he seeks a cow. And if they just come to throttle me I see them. It is the village headmen of the country who come to throttle me, the shades are not there, no, only Kiwegete and his fellows, they stand with the shades, not the others they come and suck my blood and they go away again. I do not speak,

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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754 but I see them. It's taboo to speak. They must seek blood and they go
775 off; we fear them!

753 QUESTION: Why do you chiefs never speak out if you are throttled?
KASITILE: If I speak how many would there be to name? Very many!

[689] For us it's taboo to accuse a man of witchcraft, but the commoners
[554] accuse one another. Look you, do few people keep you company?
Many!

Like us chiefs, everyone comes. It's taboo for us to speak out, we fear. Look you, when Mwambene (Mwaipopo 116) and I were alone we feared to throw out the beer, we said: 'If we throw it out will they leave?' But when Kissogota came, he said: 'All right, I will throw it
[152] out myself.' We fear the fierce great priests, the terrible witches, they are angry.[1] We shrink when they appear.

[622] The village headmen of the country call on the priests for help against us, they whisper by the fire, the priests come in their witchcraft,
● [793] they call on my shades saying, 'Let us punish him', also they eat, together with the shades. Our shades never initiate anything, never; they look to the priests. But with a commoner the shade may initiate matters himself. Yes, people whisper indeed, but is that witchcraft? No! They whisper openly and ask, 'Why did you not perform the ritual?' But even although people are silent, still the shade comes
[688] saying, 'Why did you not perform the ritual? I am on the road.' He initiates the thing himself.

QUESTION: But don't people eat meat at the ritual of a commoner?
KASITILE: Yes, and if he does not celebrate it they accuse him, but they accuse him openly.

QUESTION: If the heir buries him with a few cattle?

688 KASITILE: If a rich commoner dies and the heir buries him with only
775 one cow, the shades are angry and the people also; their chilling
774 breath comes on his body, perhaps he falls ill himself, perhaps his child falls ill, but the people and witches do not meet together, people are angry here, and the shades there; all of them and the shades too, because he has celebrated with one cow only. People are angry because
[787] they wish to eat the meat. But the oracle says, 'The shades are angry.' It does not speak of people, it knows that people also are angry, but it speaks of the shades. And at the celebration he prays in the evening, the next day he calls people and kills a cow, and throws the sacred
[783] meat in the banana grove, saying, 'Here is your meat, father.' People say, 'Indeed he did wrong, his father was angry', but they do not confess saying, 'It was we', no, they say 'the shades' . . .

[826] We chiefs have bodies which are different, the commoners arrived
[554] first in the country, they ate raw food, we fear them saying, 'They eat raw food.' It is we who followed and brought fire. To us they confess

[1] *Iminyago indoni mikalala.* The noun class implies size, ferocity, and dislike.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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(their witchcraft); to each other they say: 'It is your father.' Because if they confess to a fellow commoner saying, 'It is we', he says, 'You are "eating" me, drink the ordeal'. The witch is driven out. But to us they admit saying, 'It was we who were angry.' They do not fear us. Commoners are the seniors in the country; they arrived first.

It will be remembered that the commoners are spoken of as 'black people' (*abatitu*) and that the first chiefs were 'pale' (*mwelu*) but these words also have moral implications. 'It is said that a person "has a black heart" or "has black blood", or "is black in his face towards us" when he is thought to be a witch, eating his fellows, or when he is a thief, or a liar, or an adulterer, or dirty. Even though his body is light coloured (*mwelu*) the word "black" (*ntitu*) is used of him metaphorically.' And *mwelu* implies innocent, pure, as well as light in colour. The comparable symbolism of 'nigger' and 'white man' is all too familiar in Johannesburg or Charleston.

That Kasitile himself was much afraid of the commoner chiefs and was relieved by the 'speaking out' was clear, and the people of the country as a whole were glad that the ritual had been celebrated, for they expected an increase in fertility. Some days later Mwakyonde (148), came in and said, laughing, but half serious: 'Congratulations, Mwaipaja (G.W.). You have celebrated the ritual, we rejoice greatly, you give us fertility of the soil, you are a great priest.'

In some moods Kasitile was inclined to become a Christian, but he felt an obligation to the country as priest, and believed too strongly in the efficacy of the traditional rituals to abandon them. He said to G.W. one day, over a pot of beer: 'If it were not for the ritual I would get you to speak to the Europeans of the mission, and I would go with my wife Jane, and be baptized. If my son was old enough and had agreed to carry on the ritual I would do it; perhaps I will when I am old. . . . It is good to have one's heart washed clean, we are dirty inside. The Christians say to us: "You with your four wives each, you are all dirty, you love one and squabble with the rest." Well, it is so with me, I love Jane only; I would like to go and be baptized with her. But I fear for the ritual, I fear hunger, the hunger of the people. For I am the food of the country, I am the maker of food.'

We left Selya shortly after this and were not able to observe the effect of the ritual on political relationships in Selya. Kasitile lived another seventeen years, duly performing his functions, and in 1954 he was succeeded by his brother's son, James.

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791 *inyifwila* comes from west of Ngonde, or east of the Kinga; *mwafi*
[439] came from 'Nyasaland'; medicine for fertility of the fields from
[278] Misuku which is rich in food; war medicine from the Sangu and
[438] Kinga. Whether neighbouring people get medicines from Bu-Nyakyusa we do not know—no one ever suggested it, but it is likely that they do.

Since foreign doctors and medicines have the highest reputation
[177] new treatments are welcomed. This is where the practice of medicines differs radically from the rituals directed to the shades in which the charter is tradition, and any deviation must be justified. But the willingness to accept something new did not lead to any systematic experiment, or any regard for experiment as such.

791 Anyone who chooses, and can pay the fees, can become a
278 doctor by apprenticing himself to a practitioner of repute, but it is very noticeable that the majority of well-known doctors come from families of doctors, the medicines being passed down from one generation to the next and sometimes taught to wives as well. Lyandileko, who has often been quoted, was taught certain medicines by her husband, and had a large practice. The diviners we knew were all men, but many women know a number of medicines. Once in practice, a doctor may add to his knowledge by buying a medicine from a fellow practitioner or exchanging medicines with him. One doctor we knew had paid two bulls for the secret of his protective medicine (*umkota gwa ipingo*). The teaching includes what plants or other ingredients to collect and how to 'cook' them, i.e. what to mix together and what quantities to use. As elsewhere in Africa, it is the material substance, usually vegetable, which is held to be important in any treatment. The spell—the words addressed to the medicine—is of little significance except that when vengeance magic is prepared the man on whose behalf it is done may say the name of his enemy (if he knows his identity) and state his own innocence in a phrase like the following: 'Return this medicine, thou Kyala, I have done no wrong whatsoever to cause me to be killed; if he says he will kill me let him die.'

The doctor (*inganga*) who 'knows medicines' is distinguished
791 from the priest or officiant (*unyago*) who knows how to conduct a
793 ritual directed to the shades or heroes. The *unyago* uses medicines in celebrating rituals, and he or she may be able to collect and prepare plants himself, but he sometimes has to apply to a doctor

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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for an appropriate medicine, and his main function is organizing the observances. 791 793

(*d*) SYMBOLISM

In the field of medicine imagination runs riot, and associations are unpredictable. The ingredients of most medicines are professional secrets and unknown to the user who takes the concoction on trust from his doctor, and inquires no further. Therefore the study of medicine is not linked to the study of social relationships in the same manner as is the study of ritual, for the symbolism of medicines is individual and free, whereas the symbolism of ritual is common and obligatory. 278 789

Nevertheless, the imagination of doctors works within the general symbolic system, and such knowledge as we have indicates that many of the associations made are similar to those used in ritual. In medicine, as in the rituals of kinship, one type of banana stands for a male, another for a female, a banana sucker represents a kinsman, a sprouting shoot conception. Smithing and coition are felt to be alike, and the molten iron that trickles out of a forge is linked with menstrual blood. Hair stands for growth, and a bald pate a devastated field. A ring, or circumambulation, implies a protecting fence. Pythons, crocodiles, leopards, and lions stand for power and majesty, spears and thorns for attack; vomiting and emptiness for innocence, spitting for forgiveness. There is colour symbolism in medicines (though we know little of it save that the *ikipiki* which stands for the blood of the lineage is red, or reddish brown), and auditory symbolism, the rumble of thunder and the groaning of a bellows being identified. Men mime that which they wish to avoid, as well as that which they desire; like things are antagonistic as well as sympathetic. No doubt a laborious study of prescriptions would reveal further general principles of association, as well as the range of individual imagination, but such a task has yet to be undertaken. [831] [326] [825] [827] [822]

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The shade is the principle of life represented by seed, or the root of a banana, or a tree growing by a grave;[1] the hero embodied a vital force which caused grain to sprout and clay cattle to breathe. The line between a hero, the shade of one of his successors, and the shade of a chief is a very faint one. They all have power over people other than their descendants and are approached by hereditary priests. As some elderly men of Ngonde put it: 'The nobles, not the living Kyungu, go to the groves of the Kyungus to pray; they go because the Kyungus who have died are shades to us all (*bo basyuka betu twesa*).'

The heroes had miraculous power but it differed in degree, rather than in kind, from that possessed by their descendants. Like that of the divine kings and chiefs it lay both in their own bodies and in medicines, especially the *ifingila* which is still used by chiefs.

Kyala and Lwembe dwell 'beneath' (*pasi*) with the shades, as opposed to 'above' (*kumwanya*), which implied traditionally 'on earth' not 'in the sky'. There is no hint of a sky god in the traditional system, and the distinction between black and white offerings, which the early missionaries took to be a distinction between offerings to the shades and to a sky god,[2] was unequivocally interpreted by the priests in another fashion. The white (*mwelu*) offering to Kyala or Ngulube is a symbol not of purity, but of an unclouded sky, and the numinous quality of the heroes is conceived of as contamination, not holiness. Like the shades, the heroes must be 'driven off' lest men go mad, and it is when they have driven them away that men are *belu*—white, innocent, free of anger. Men should be *belu* but this is never cited as an attribute of the pagan Kyala. It is the terribleness, not the goodness or purity of God of which the Nyakyusa are aware. This is underlined by the fact that a madman who, 'when he comes home rushes off', and 'does not see that his fellows are human beings,' and who 'has a loose heart' (i.e. is passionate and quarrelsome), or 'whose heart curls up like a leaf in the sun, or turns upside down', is called 'Mbasi' or is said to have been 'caught hold of by Kyala'.

Kyala is one hero among others but, as has been shown, the name is *also* used in the sense of 'the lord'. Kyala as 'the lord' of a commoner or junior kinsman is distinct from Kyala the hero with his own place in a genealogy and his own shrine. The difference

[1] Monica Wilson, *Rituals of Kinship*, pp. 205-7, 211 *et passim*.

[2] F. Fülleborn, *Das Deutsche Njassa- und Ruwuma-Gebiet*, pp. 321-2.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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797 *Aim*
795 The aim of this Church is the uplifting of the African *en masse* taking
779 in its rise the old people who are at present being left out by religions of the North and its civilization, as well as winning those who are considered bad because of polygamy and drink, and are refused any latent qualities for doing good any more, to try and restore an atmosphere of a deeply, naturally religious life as prevailed in the days of long ago which was manifest in words as well as deeds.

Regarding the organization of the Church, it was stated:

Every district requiring a Pastor shall submit its application to the annual General Conference for its approval.

Any novice Pastor elected and ordained by the minister shall not be entitled at his early appointment or nomination to administer the ministerial duties, but shall sit with his Presiding Pastor for at least six months for his qualification as a minister.

If any Church, elders, preachers, deacons or group of Churches shall be found ordaining a Pastor or Pastors without the approval of the Annual General Conference, leaders of such offending Churches shall be brought before the Annual General Conference for trial and if found guilty be suspended or expelled from the organization.

The office bearers of our organization shall be as follows:

[793]
(*a*) The Secretary who is the sole head of the organization.
(*b*) The Presiding Pastors.
(*c*) Pastors.
(*d*) Preachers.
(*e*) Elders.
(*f*) Deacons and Deaconesses.

The Society shall be divided into districts over which one Presiding Pastor shall be stationed to supervise a Pastor or Pastors under him in that area.

It shall be the duty of every Pastor to feed his flock and to sit as Chairman of his Kirk Session, to enforce the discipline of the Church and to forward his monthly report to his Presiding Pastor.

It shall be the duty or duties of the Presiding Pastor to visit his Pastor or Pastors showing or teaching them good governance of the Church and to send to the Secretary his quarterly reports of his district activities.

If any of the Presiding Pastors or Pastors shall fail to comply with the rules of this constitution they shall upon conviction thereof by the Annual General Conference, be suspended or expelled from the Church.

It shall be the duties of the Elders to look after their Church members

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going about visiting them in their homes and leading them in a Christian life and to report to his Session all the offending members. 797x 795x

It shall be the duties of a Preacher to go about preaching the Gospel to beginners as well as helping Pastors to encourage members at the Church on Sundays. He should keep records of his itinerary and report the same to his district Pastor. [793]

It shall be the duties of every Deacon whether male or female, to see that all members pay their monthly contribution which is one penny per month and to bring monies or foodstuffs to his or her Pastor at the end of every month, and to bring to the Session those who neglect to pay.

Pastors through the Presiding Pastor are empowered to administer Sacraments—to Baptize and dispense Holy Communion and to ordain or remove any Elder, Preacher or Deacon who neglects his or her duties, and to report their activities to their Presiding Pastor.

To clear away suspicions among the people, Christians or non-Christians, Pastor or Pastors in the district if found guilty of misconduct or any case of adultery shall be brought to their Session to be tried, and if found guilty shall be suspended from the ministerial duties until his case is referred to the Annual General Conference by his District Pastor. [684]

Any Presiding Pastor or Pastors found intentionally violating these rules as constituted and approved by the Annual General Conference shall, at the discretion of the said General Conference, be suspended or expelled from the Church.

All monies of the Church shall within three months' time be forwarded to the Secretary of Religion who shall Bank same in the Savings Bank.

The term of service for Elders and Deacons or Deaconesses shall be for two years only, but an office-bearer may also be suspended before the end of his or her term if: [681]

He or she has committed misconduct.
He or she neglects to fulfil his or her duties.
He or she does not attend Church worship.
He or she is a drunkard.
He or she is unruly.
He or she marries unlawfully against Native law which binds African marriages.

No office-bearer of any rank shall be found preaching when he is drunk, but shall hand the Service over to someone else.

Every member of the African National Church shall kneel down when praying. One who is preaching can kneel or stand.

Every member of the African National Church shall cease to drink

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(c) *Kasela* (Generation IV and V)

Boys (none married)		*Father*	*Father's village*
Andulu	full brothers	Mwaseba (152)	Mpunga
Alijesi			
Jestina			
Mololo	half-brothers	Mwaseba (152)	Mpunga
Freda			
Tukafika			
Lascki			
Kimamba			
Abandubandu		Bampolile	Masoko
Andambile		Peteli	Masoko
Lalogwa		Mbukanya	Masoko
Bandadanwile		Imilano	Masoko
Anigwile		Mungile	Masoko
Kofia		Gusike	Masoko
Kaswelile		Mwaiposi	Masoko
Akipwele		Mwankuni	Masoko
Bajeko		Mwangosi	Masoko
Adumile		Gwilliam	Masoko (Inherited in Lupondo)
Kajobene		Mwalusamba	Masoko
Fryin		Anitike	Masoko
Mwitingi		Simeon	Masoko
Ndalwisye		Mwangoje	Masoko
Osijah		Mwaipaja	Mfumbi

i.e. out of twenty-three members, two are full brothers and six others are half-brothers. No other kinship connections were traced.

COMMONER PRIESTS MENTIONED

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Kikungubeja, Kyamba Kitali, Nsyanigwa, Silobwike	Hereditary Kinga priests who come to Lubaga and visit Kasitile on the way
Kissoule, Mwamalunguka, Mwambipili	Hereditary priests of Lubaga
Mwamakunda	Kasitile's assistant priest
Mwalukuta, Nyama	Hereditary priests of Mbyanga, the grove of Mwakisambwe (30)
Kissogota, Ngulyo, Njobakosa	Village headmen of Mwaijonga (82) and priests of his grove
Mwambuputa, Kakuju	Village headmen of Mwankuga (150) and priests responsible for 'coming out' of Mwanyilu (177)

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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£25,500 was earned by Nyakyusa migrant labourers and those employed in the district.[1] Earnings from employment are thus probably about equal to the total earnings from the sale of produce.

Within the district Nyakyusa men are employed in Government service as clerks, hospital orderlies, agricultural inspectors, and as labourers on roads and buildings. They are employed also as house servants by Europeans, as labourers on the twelve European-owned estates in the district, and as shop assistants and servants by Indian traders. There is also a little employment of Nyakyusa by Nyakyusa in agricultural work. Traditionally chiefs, being responsible for hoeing the fields of many wives, sometimes employed poor men to hoe for them, rewarding them after two hoeing seasons with a heifer or bull, but the extent of such employment was, in the old days, small and confined to the chiefs. Nowadays it has been considerably extended, rich men employing others to hoe or, less commonly, to plough for them, and paying them in stock or cash. A few monogamists also employ young boys to assist their wives in fetching wood and water.

Most Nyakyusa men now take paid employment at one time or another. Of a small sample of seventy-nine men, seventy-six (94 per cent) had been in paid employment. There was, however, a marked difference between the work histories of young and old, and between pagan and Christian. Of the pagan men over middle age, the majority of those who worked had not done so willingly, but had been conscripted as carriers, and the total periods for which they had worked were short, averaging under six months per man. On the other hand, all the Christian men over middle age had worked willingly, and the total period for which each had worked averaged over twelve years. Of the young men, all who had worked had done so willingly, but as with the older men, there was a marked difference between the length of time pagans and Christians spent in employment. The profession of Christianity is, amongst the Nyakyusa, correlated with education, and Christian young men, more especially the sons of Christians, tend to secure the skilled or semi-skilled jobs. Those who have skilled work tend to stay longer in a job and return home less frequently because they fear lest they may not find an equally good job again, and because they have often travelled far to find skilled

[1] Based on the estimated number of men in employment, and an analysis of wage rates within and outside the district.

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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464 795 work. The unskilled can always get a job, and frequent moves make little difference to their pay. In the sample taken 81 per cent of the Christian sons of Christians, 40 per cent of the Christian sons of pagans, and 5 per cent of the pagan sons of pagans had had skilled or semi-skilled jobs. These cases are set out in a table on p. 193. Of twenty-eight individuals who remained over a year at a stretch in employment, twenty were in skilled or semi-skilled jobs, and eighteen had had some schooling.

166 It was very difficult to get adequate information on the proportion of time that young men spent away, for though the periods they spent at work might be accurately remembered, the periods at home were not easily recorded. Ten young Christians (other than those cited in the sample above), whose work histories were carefully investigated, had spent, on the average, eighteen and a half months, out of the twenty-five months preceding their return home, in employment outside Rungwe district. That is, they had spent less than a quarter of their time at home. They are certainly not typical of the whole district, but they are probably not unrepresentative of the young Christians.

Certain points emerge from this study. Firstly, the time spent away from their homes at work by middle-aged and elderly pagans is negligible. Secondly, the middle-aged Christians have all worked for long periods, but during most of that time they have lived with their families in Christian villages attached to missions in the district; they are not migrants in the sense that their sons are, though they move from one mission village to another following employment. Thirdly, the great bulk of the young men work outside the district at some time, and those in skilled jobs (mostly Christians) tend to stay away for much longer periods than the unskilled. The effects of this are noticed by Nyakyusa themselves, who remarked of Kabembe Christian village that: 'There were few nice houses, for so many of the young men are away at work.' Nevertheless, even in Christian villages, the effects of men's absence is much less marked than it is in Ngonde, where the percentage of absentees is estimated at over half the able-bodied men.[1]

[464] [1] It was estimated in 1934 that the total male labour force of the district was approximately 10,000 and that, of these, 500 men were in Southern Rhodesia and the Union, and 5,000 on the Lupa goldfields. (Figures supplied by courtesy of the District Commissioner, Karonga, from District records.)

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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606 house, one pouring wet day, when sitting or cooking out of doors was impossible. Mwambelike's wife was cooking for us and other visitors. Suddenly there was a cry from her husband and others, 'Father-in-law!' She ran out of the room, leaving her cooking. The man who came in was a mother's brother's son (*untani*) of Mwambelike's father, and counted as a mother's brother (*umwipa*) to Mwambelike. Mwambelike explained to him that his wife was cooking and asked him to stay 'at the door', so he went out, and the woman came back. She cooked placidly for half an hour. Mwambelike said: 'Tell my daughter to come and help you with the cooking', then, looking round, he said: 'Oh no, she can't, her father-in-law is here too.' This was her betrothed husband's mother's brother. Mwambelike's daughter was about thirteen years old and had not yet reached puberty. Some time later the wife called to this girl to bring her some water. Nothing was said by the men and after three calls the girl scurried in giggling, put the water down, and scurried out. Then the men took notice, the 'father-in-law' said nothing, but Mwambelike said apologetically: 'It's all right; she did not look at him.' When the wife had finished cooking our food she went out, and the men called her 'father-in-law' in. He stayed about five minutes then, realizing that all the men were hungry, he said: 'I will go away. Let her get on with her cooking'; so he went out and she came back and cooked for the other guests.

606 177 ●795 The strength of the feeling against seeing one's father-in-law is apparent in the behaviour of Christian women. The missionaries have taught that avoidance is unnecessary and inconvenient, if not unchristian, and that a daughter-in-law should behave as a daughter to her husband's father. Various Christian women assured us that they 'did not avoid their fathers-in-law', though most admitted to 'avoiding a little'. One day S—, who had volunteered that she did not avoid her father-in-law, had come to tea with us, together with another Christian woman. S—'s father-in-law, a chief, came along the veranda on an unexpected visit. Before he was visible S— leapt up, gasped 'father-in-law!' and hid herself in the corner of the room behind the door, facing the wall with her face buried in her hands. She stood there a few seconds gasping, then came back to her place and pushing away her chair, sat down on the floor, whispering determinedly: 'I *won't* avoid him, I *won't* avoid him.' Her friend also slipped off

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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her chair and sat on the floor. We said to Mwaipopo as he entered: 'There is a daughter-in-law here.' He said: 'That's all right, she is enjoying the company of Kagile (M.W.)', but he was obviously restive, and went outside as soon as food appeared. He said to G.W.: 'That's quite all right, let them go on enjoying each other's company. She (i.e. S—) does not avoid me because M— (a local missionary) brought her to me one day and I killed a bull for them, but let us stay outside now, for they would be ashamed to eat.' The women protested very much saying *they* would go out, but the chief would not agree. As soon as they had drunk their tea they hurried off, and crouching down with their backs towards the men they answered their farewell greetings.

In reply to queries as to why they insist that father-in-law and daughter-in-law avoid one another, the Nyakyusa relate a myth of incest between them: 'Long ago a chief's son married a very beautiful wife. The boy's father saw the girl and after one look desired her, for she was very beautiful, and he said: "She is fit to be a chief's wife (*umwehe*)." Men said this was a very bad thing and agreed that in future they would not look at their daughters-in-law. That is how avoidance began. It was for fear of fathers making love to their sons' wives.' This myth is related with some diffidence, and not everyone knows it, but it was told us, or referred to, repeatedly, and may be taken as current in the society. One informant, a very intelligent woman doctor, also associated seeing a father-in-law with seeing his sexual activities. 'We think that to see your husband's father is very rude, because it is as if you saw him sleeping with your husband's mother. You compare, you see, your husband's body and you see your husband's father's body. It is very bad.'

Age-villages are then associated with the feeling that fathers-in-law and daughters-in-law must be kept completely separate lest they should commit incest, and that adolescent youths should not have any glimpse of the sexual activities of their parents; but the separation of the generations is not complete, for marriage with the daughter of a village neighbour is approved, provided he is not an *immediate* neighbour. Mwakionde explained that in the old days people disliked marriage with the daughter of a next-door neighbour because she was 'like a daughter'—'the fathers ate *embalaga* (a dish made with bananas) together'—but marriage with the daughters of other village-mates was always approved.

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usually has a separate hut for its girls, to which, we were told, their lovers come secretly by night.

Nyakyusa informants connected the existence of girls' houses with the marriage age. In Ngonde the marriage age of girls is much higher than it is among the Nyakyusa, partly because there are many more Christians (45 per cent as against 16 per cent) who do not allow polygyny, partly because even the girls from pagan families in Ngonde dislike marrying a polygynist, and partly because a much higher percentage of young men are away at work, than from Nyakyusa country. Formerly, they said, the marriage age was higher among the Nyakyusa also, and then the Nyakyusa had *isaka*. It is certain that among the Nyakyusa betrothal of a girl has long taken place before puberty, for the husband plays an essential part in the puberty ritual, and there were always some girls who were betrothed when quite tiny; but the evidence is fairly clear that the average age of betrothal among the pagans has been going down. The Nyakyusa view is that no man in his senses, who is able to marry, will engage a little girl of eight if he can find one approaching puberty; and it is the scarcity of wives that makes men 'marry' little girls. It is also clear that the number of cattle in the country, and their rate of circulation, has increased during the last two decades, so there are 'too many cattle chasing too few brides' with the result that the marriage age of girls has fallen, and the number of cattle given at marriage has increased.

Once she is betrothed, a girl's 'husband' has exclusive sexual rights over her, and she cannot entertain lovers in the *isaka*. The only two occasions on which she may flirt and have external relations with a man other than her husband, are during an initiation ceremony, when the girls of the village who have not yet reached puberty sleep with their fellow who is being initiated, and there entertain young men, and when she accompanies a bride to her husband's house. A bridegroom is expected to have external relations with his wife's two friends, as well as with his wife, on the night they bring her to his house. Love-making at the initiation-marriage ritual is held to be 'part of the ritual' and a means of sex education, and a husband can make no complaint about his 'wife' receiving lovers then, provided that penetration does not take place.

Homosexual practices are said to be very common in the boys'

1:Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
Nyakyusa

838 villages—they begin among boys of ten to fourteen herding cows, and continue among young men until marriage, but they are said never to continue after that, and are regarded simply as a substitute for heterosexual pleasure. 'A man never dreams of making love to another man'—only of making love to a woman. If a boy's own father, or a village father, finds a son with another youth he will beat him, but provided both parties were willing, there is no court case, and the older men treat the practice tolerantly as a manifestation of adolescence. To force a fellow to [684] have homosexual intercourse against his will is a serious offence, comparable to witchcraft (*vide* Document, p. 196). Lesbian practices are said also to exist, but we have no certain evidence of this: if they do occur it is much more likely to be among the older wives of chiefs and other polygynists than among the girls, who have so much attention from young men.'

864 It is in conversation and play with village contemporaries that some knowledge of sex is acquired. Girls learn about sex from their immediate seniors, and they get some sex experience, along with formal instruction on morals, at the puberty rituals of their seniors in the age-village and at their own initiation. Boys learn from the conversation of their older fellows at night, in the boys' village. Any suggestion that sex education should be given by parents or middle-aged teachers shocks the Nyakyusa profoundly, for they hold that discussion of sex is totally incompatible with the respect due from children to parents. The taboo on sex talk between members of different generations appears to be absolute among men, but is less emphasized among women, for formal instruction on morals is given to a girl by her mother's fellows during the initiation ritual, and a young wife of her father, or of her father's neighbour, may whisper advice on sex matters even although she is classed as a 'mother'.

534 As we have already indicated, there are profound differences between pagans and Christians in their sex code. The Christian 795 dogma that sex relations should only take place between adult 177 married persons excludes the freedom of girls to have external sex relations before betrothal, or in the 'bride's' hut; it excludes girls visiting their betrothed husbands before puberty; and it excludes homosexuality, which is regarded as a mortal sin. Segregation of successive generations is not a part of the Christian tradition, hence the modifications in the rules of avoid-

1: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938) 1951 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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ance among Nyakyusa Christians, and the tendency for fathers and sons to build fairly close to one another.

The forms of display approved among Christians are also changing with the change in the sex code. The nakedness of the Nyakyusa shocked the missionaries, and it is insisted that Christian women, as well as men, should wear at least one cloth; also many of the traditional dances and songs are felt by the Nyakyusa converts themselves to be incompatible with the profession of Christianity, consequently at funerals and weddings there is often a group of Christians dancing quite separately from pagans, and singing their own song, which, more often than not, is a hymn. A wedding dance to a hymn does not appear incongruous to Nyakyusa, as it does to European observers.

e. Wisdom

There is a very close connection between the values we have cited, and all save one are coherent with one another. The enjoyment of good company implies observance of the rules of decency; *ukwangala* is between equals, not between parents and children; it merges into neighbourliness, for one who does not help, or seek help from, a neighbour is unfriendly (*atikwangala kanunu*); and it is dependent upon that generous hospitality which is one of the manifestations of dignity (*ubusisya*).

The one value which is not wholly coherent with the others is the value of display (*ukumoga*). Certain forms of display are compatible with urbanity and friendliness between neighbours, but the swaggering truculence of the warrior is not—it is liable to breed quarrels between fellow villagers, as well as with outsiders; and display also ceases to be compatible with other values when it involves adultery. The friends of a woman who has eloped with a lover may greet her with the phrase: '*Ndaga, umogile*!' which literally translated means 'Thank you, you have displayed yourself', and implies, 'Congratulations! Had a good time?' But no Nyakyusa would maintain that to commit adultery was, in general, good.

The all-embracing virtue to the Nyakyusa is wisdom (*amahala*). It includes the enjoyment of company and the practice of hospitality, for no man is wise who is surly, or aloof, or stingy; it includes neighbourly behaviour, dignity, and respect for law and

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convention, but it does not include display. The wise may dance, but they do not need to dance in order to be wise, and those who commit adultery, or are boastful, or quarrelsome show foolishness (*ubukonyofu*) and sinful pride (*amatingo*), the opposite of wisdom. Wisdom is expressed in all relationships, not only in village relationships, but it is *learned* in the village; pagan Nyakyusa insist that 'it is by conversing with our friends that we gain wisdom'.

The Christian view is somewhat different. Urbanity, neighbourliness, hospitality, and dignity are components of wisdom for a Christian also, but he would add something further—'the knowledge of God'—and such knowledge is sought not in village relationships only. It is sought also in schools, in the religious teaching of the missionaries, in the scriptures, in worship, and in prayer.

Having considered some of the values[1] realized in age-villages, we now turn to the sanctions maintaining them.

[1] It may be asked why we have omitted fertility in our discussion of values realized in village relationships, when fertility in men, cattle, and fields is one of the ultimate values of Nyakyusa society. The reason is that fertility is realized in the relationships of kinship and of the chiefdom, rather than in village relationships. The village rituals in the fields, which we have described, are primarily defensive—to protect the crops against the attacks of witches and sorcerers—and the fertility of the soil is held to depend mainly on the chief, and the rituals he performs on behalf of his country.

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which witchcraft and 'the breath of men' operate, but their supposed fields of action are relatively distinct.

In the past, the punishment for sorcery was death with torture by impaling, not merely confiscation of property and banishment. Proof of the practice of sorcery depended upon the evidence of the doctor who had supplied the medicine (who was not regarded as implicated in the crime) and upon the *umwafi* ordeal. The Nyakyusa insist that the practice of sorcery was formerly rare, and that it has increased enormously, much more than the practice of witchcraft. This belief is to be related to two facts. First, Nyakyusa co-operate much more than they formerly did with people who live in different villages. The clerks who work together in Government offices, and who have a fearsome reputation as sorcerers, do not necessarily live in the same village; and being apart at night when the witches fly, they cannot be supposed to bewitch one another. But there is frequent occasion for friction between them and therefore a standing temptation to employ sorcery. So also in other types of employment, in trade and on journeys, individuals are frequently in contact with men of different villages. Secondly, belief in sorcery is felt to be compatible with the acceptance of a scientific explanation of causes of disease in a way that belief in witchcraft is not. *Ubutege* is commonly translated as 'poisoning' by those who speak English, whether the medicine is or is not put into food or drink, or whether it is supposed to affect all who eat it or only the individual against whom it is directed. All types of sorcery tend to be rationalized as 'poisoning'; and many educated Nyakyusa who deny the reality of witchcraft admit to a lively fear of sorcerers.

As the table on pp. 198–213 shows, however, accusations of witchcraft are still much more common than accusations of sorcery in the community as a whole. We heard of thirty-eight cases of supposed witchcraft to eleven of sorcery, and there was no reason to think that our friends were more likely to mention the one type of case than the other.

d. The age-village and Christianity

Since common action against witches, and to punish transgressors through 'the breath of men', is one of the primary functions of an age-village, what happens in a Christian village, or

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795 754 184 when members of a pagan village embrace Christianity? Orthodox Nyakyusa Christians, that is, those accepting the teaching of the European missionaries of any of the four denominations at work in the area, deny the reality of witchcraft and of 'the breath of men'; they deny the power of any individual to harm another by virtue of 'a python' in the stomach, or to bring illness to his erring neighbour by murmuring with others about him.

As we have already seen, the profession of Christianity and school education tend to coincide among the Nyakyusa, and the educated tend to be sceptical of witchcraft, while believing in sorcery. Such scepticism is directly related to the dogmatic teaching of missionaries, to instruction in physiology in schools, and to the challenge of certain missionaries and Nyakyusa Christians that pagans should prove the existence of witchcraft at autopsies (*vide* Document, p. 254). The suggestion that 'pythons' are really acute tape-worm (*vide supra* p. 92) or an enlarged kidney is typical of the critical attitude of educated Christians to pagan dogma. We have no doubt that belief in witchcraft is weakening, and that this weakening is directly due to mission teaching.

795 754 184 626 Nevertheless most Christians continue to have some belief in a mystical power exerted by individuals or groups to the harm of others. For a few the contradiction between the traditional and the Christian dogma involves acute mental conflict; for many the conflict is resolved through the concept of 'the curse' (*ikigune*) of the congregation, fed by the priest or pastor and elders, and through emphasis on sorcery rather than on witchcraft. Most Christians believe that the just wrath of those set in authority, and of the faithful members of a congregation, may bring misfortune on a sinner. They argue that the power which punishes the wrong-doer comes from God, not from ancestors or from pythons in men's bellies, but that it is brought upon an individual by the anger and murmuring of men.[1] Further, it is believed that

[1] The phrase 'the breath of men' (*umbepo nya bandu*) is never used with reference to the punishment of sinners in the Christian congregation, but always 'the curse' (*ikigune*), a word which is used to translate certain phrases in the Gospels, and which conveys an idea felt to be compatible with Christian dogma. As already noted (p. 101) the pagans of the plain and of Selya use 'the curse' (*ikigune*) more or less synonomously with 'the breath of men' (*umbepo nya bandu*). For details of cases of misfortune attributed to the curse of Christians see Monica Hunter, 'An African Christian Morality', *Africa*, Vol. X (1937), pp. 265–91.

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Christians are only affected by the shocked astonishment of fellow Christians, not by the disapproval of pagans, and the unit within which 'the curse' is commonly spoken of as operating is the congregation. In two of the cases we recorded (*vide* Document, p. 209) it was suggested that illness was due to the anger of neighbours, fellow Christians, over stinginess and greed, but in the other cases it was not village neighbours who were primarily concerned, but the Christian congregation, a group embracing members from many villages.

The type of behaviour believed to be punishable by 'the curse' of fellow Christians also differs somewhat from that thought to be punished by 'the breath of men'. The virtue Christians emphasize most is chastity, and 'the curse' is often said to be a punishment for fornication or adultery. The other sin commonly spoken of as bringing down a curse is disobedience, or disrespectful behaviour to the minister (or priest) or elder of the congregation. Among pagans 'the breath of men' serves also to sanction sexual morals and to sustain respect for those in authority, but their sex code is different. It is incest, or familiarity between father- and daughter-in-law, which they regard as really evil, not sex relations outside marriage. And they emphasize respect to senior relatives and fathers' neighbours rather than to the leaders of any wider group.

Christians lay much less stress on hospitality to neighbours than pagans, and it is generally agreed that they eat alone more than pagans would dare to do. As one Christian put it, a pagan would *always* call his neighbours to share meat or beer when he had it, but a Christian might eat a sheep, or a goat, or even a calf, alone with his family. It is good, the Christians say, to call friends to share a feast, but not an inescapable obligation. Nor do Christians regularly send the saddle and ribs of any animal they kill to the chief, as pagans do; 'for', they say, 'we do not fear "the breath of men".' But hospitality towards strangers is felt to be a condition of salvation. One informant explained that 'If a man is stingy towards his neighbours it does not matter; but if he is stingy towards a stranger from a distance, he might die from lack of food; and that would be the fault of the stingy one. Such a fault would prevent *him* from entering Heaven.' This statement points to the most striking difference between Christian and pagan morality—the range of moral obligations. A pagan's duties

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795 are primarily to his kinsmen and fellow villagers, and secondarily
574 to fellow members of his chiefdom; beyond the chiefdom and
184 circle of kinsmen he had, traditionally, no obligations. The
577 Christian definition of 'neighbour' is a much wider one. It is emphasized by the missionaries that the Christian Church is universal, and Nyakyusa Christians themselves are conscious of their unity with, and obligations to, members of other chiefdoms, other cultural groups, and other races. The new sanctions for behaviour operating within the Christian group—the emphasis on Christian duty; the hope of that 'peace which passeth all understanding' and of eternal life; and the fear of suspension or expulsion from the communion of the faithful, and of hell-fire[1]—all these apply to relations beyond, as well as within, the village, the chiefdom, and the circle of kin.

795 Two other points were mentioned by Christian informants
184 when discussing the differences between pagan and Christian
577 morality: they said that Christian children growing up were liable to be 'proud' (*namatingo*) in their bearing and manner of greeting, because they do not fear 'the breath of men'; and also that Christian men were not afraid to ask many cattle for their daughters at marriage, again because they do not fear their neighbours' disapproval in the way pagans fear it. The implication is that there is less insistence upon conformity to a given code among Christians than among pagans; a greater tolerance of diversity of behaviour.

795 These differences between pagan and Christian dogma are
788 matched by differences between their ritual. There are no
184 Christian rituals in which the village as a group, distinct from other groups, is concerned. The congregation—the group worshipping in one church—is drawn from many villages, and though devout Christians living in the same neighbourhood often gather for morning and evening prayer, such rituals never include a whole village. Even in a Christian village on mission land only a small proportion of the villagers attend daily prayer regularly. As we have seen, the members of a pagan village meet from time to time to warn off witches, or to bless a repentant wrong-doer (*vide supra*, pp. 101, 109 ff.), but since belief in witchcraft or in 'the curse' is not orthodox among Christians, there is no ritual con-

[1] cf. Monica Hunter, 'An African Christian Morality', *Africa*, Vol. X (1937), p. 265–91.

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nected with it in a Christian village or village-section. The nearest parallel to the pagan ritual of reconciliation is the formal readmission of a repentant sinner to the congregation.

The change in belief and ritual tends to weaken village solidarity; for the Christian village is neither a defensive unit, nor is it the group from within which retribution and forgiveness come. A Christian does not feel himself dependent upon village neighbours to the same degree as does a pagan. We argue that the extension of the range of interdependence reduces its intensity in the narrower circles of relationship, and this is evident in the religious as in the economic aspect.[1]

Since the authority of a village headman is largely dependent upon his supposed mystical power, Christians are rarely appointed to this office by the Nyakyusa. We heard of only one Christian headman and he was in the country of a Christian chief. Christians cannot go through the full 'coming out' ceremony which involves treatment with medicines to give *amanga*, and a Christian headman cannot fulfil the traditional ritual functions in relation to the chief and his ancestors. But in Ngonde, where the percentage of Christians is high (46 per cent as opposed to 15 per cent among the Nyakyusa) and the 'coming out' ceremony has been dropped, there are a number of Christian headmen who simply abstain from the performance of any pagan rituals (as does the Kyungu himself) leaving them to those headmen who are pagan and feel the ritual to be important. And pagan informants whom we asked about defence against witchcraft in a village in which the headman was a Christian, replied: 'Others will protect the country from witchcraft,' implying that there are always other 'defenders' in a village besides its leader.

In Christian village-sections the same difficulties do not arise, for assistant headmen are never treated at the 'coming out', nor have they ritual functions, other than the formal reproof of supposed witches (*vide supra*, p. 109). Hence the recognized leader of any group of Christians living in a pagan village is normally a Christian. In Christian villages on mission land the leaders are, of course, always Christian. These villages do not participate in any 'coming out' ceremony and the leaders are appointed by the missionary in consultation with the 'session' (i.e. representatives of the congregation), not by the old chief and

[1] cf. G. and M. Wilson, *The Analysis of Social Change*, pp. 25-41.

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his village headmen. In some villages the 'elder' is both a religious leader and a secular authority, but there is a tendency to separate the two offices and to appoint a 'peacemaker' whose duty it is to settle disputes, collect taxes, and represent the village in its relationships with the chief and the administration, while the 'elder' confines himself to watching over the spiritual welfare of his people. Such division of authority is symptomatic of the growing differentiation of Nyakyusa society.

e. Witchcraft, medicines, and the British administration

Under British administration the use of the *umwafi* ordeal, imputation of witchcraft, intimidation or obtaining goods under false pretences by threats of witchcraft or sorcery, or offers of protection against them, are punishable offences. As we have seen, the ordeal is now administered only in the greatest secrecy, and probably very seldom, but accusations of witchcraft are frequent, and are even heard before the Native Courts, though not recorded (*vide* Document, p. 257). In the villages near the Government station more caution is observed in making accusations than in more remote parts of the district: very often the identity of the witch is only hinted at, or thorns are piled at his door by persons who remain anonymous (*vide supra*, p. 114) so that no individual can be convicted of imputing witchcraft. As one man put it: '"The defenders" see the witches, but cannot name them to anyone.' Autopsies continue in conservative villages but they are no longer performed on every corpse, as is said to have been customary in the old days. The chief Porokoto, himself a sceptic, argued that it was no use performing an autopsy when a charge could not be laid. If the members of a village are all convinced that a particular fellow is a witch he is forced to move, since his unpopularity becomes intolerable to him (*supra*, pp. 110–5). As Mwambuputa put it: 'We don't like him, and he doesn't like us either: he does not enjoy our company (*atikwangala na nuswe*), so he moves.' But if the friction is only between two individuals, the supposed witch may brazen it out, for without resort to the *umwafi* ordeal there is no sure means of deciding between the accuser and the accused.

The prohibition of witch-finding is not accepted as right and just: the common view is that the Europeans 'protect the witches',

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parties before referring the matter to the chief. And any decisions they may have reached are reported to the chief.

Disputes between members of a boys' village may be settled by the leader of their village, but more serious cases go to the headman of their fathers' village, and may proceed through him to the senior headman of the side. Old men go to their own headmen, but there is an appeal to the senior headman of the ruling generation, on the side in which they live, except in inheritance cases. In these the old men are the ultimate authority. Christians living in sections of pagan villages take their cases to their section leader—himself a Christian, whose position is comparable to that of a pagan assistant headman. Thence a civil case goes to the village headman, but where an offence against the Christian code is involved (as in theft, or adultery, or wife-beating) the case also comes before the court of the congregation, consisting of the minister, elders, and deacons. Disputes between members of Christian villages established on mission land come before the 'elder' or 'peacemaker' of the village, appointed by the Church, and if they are not settled by him they usually go directly to the chief. They also come before the court of the congregation if they involve an offence against Church law (cf. Document, pp. 262–3).

Disputes between pagan women are settled in the same way as disputes between men. There is neither the leadership and authority of a senior woman of the homestead as among the Nguni and Bemba,[1] nor that of a senior age-set or women's council as among the Meru[2]. The first woman to be settled as a wife in a young men's village is, as we have seen, entitled to the deference of the wives who follow her, but she has no authority over them. In the same way, though a man's senior wife takes precedence in family rituals, and the wife of a headman may lead in a village ritual, or the wife of a chief in one made on behalf of the country, such precedence in ritual does not carry authority over other women. Certain women versed in the rituals performed at puberty, marriage, birth, and death, and knowing the proper medicines to use, are called in on these occasions, but such

[1] Monica Hunter, *Reaction to Conquest*, pp. 18, 35–41; H. Kuper, *An African Aristocracy*, pp. 38–9; A. I. Richards, *Bemba Marriage and Present Economic Conditions*, Rhodes-Livingstone Papers No. 4, pp. 67–9.

[2] E. M. Holding, 'Women's Institutions and the African Church', *International Review of Missions*, July 1942, pp. 290–300.

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abanyago have no more general authority than the doctors who divine or treat the sick. Their parallels among men are the priests (also called *abanyago*) who perform the rain ritual and the sacrifices to dead chiefs.

The one position which endows a woman with legal authority is that of father's sister. A senior sister has a joint responsibility, along with the headman of the village, for the distribution of her dead brother's property, and her brother's children may appeal to her to arbitrate if they have a dispute with their father while he is yet alive: this is particularly important in the families of chiefs, since a chief's son cannot bring his father before commoners for arbitration. The authority of a father's sister is, however, exercised only within the lineage and does not extend even to wives of lineage members. Co-wives may take a dispute for arbitration to their husband, but if, as often happens, he is thought to be prejudiced, they go to a male neighbour, or to the headman of the village, in the same way as when the dispute is with an unrelated person (cf. p. 140).

Only in the group of unmarried girls in a village does there appear to be the germ of control by seniors of the same sex. We traced one case in which a quarrel between two girls nearing the age of puberty was settled by the slightly older girls of the same village, who punished one who had beaten her fellow without justification, and then lied to them when they inquired into the case, by scratching her with their nails. As they reach puberty the girls, who have grown up together in one village and formed a closely knit group, become scattered among the different age-villages of their husbands and there leadership among women is not developed (*vide infra*, pp. 171–2). This does not mean, however, that women are excluded from arbitration; they can, and frequently do, bring cases on their own account, not necessarily acting through husband or father. Unlike the pagans, Christian women who have quarrelled do sometimes ask a leading woman of their congregation to arbitrate. At Rungwe the women leaders were the sister of the chief and the wife of a teacher, both personalities; and it was to them that their fellows went to relate their troubles and ask for an opinion. We traced two such cases. Very often, however, Christian women go to a man, the Christian leader of the village, as their husbands do.

The Administration has not attempted to suppress arbitration

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166 783 A man who has been driven out and then fetched back provides a feast for his friends on his return. This feast is essentially the same as the 'ritual of reconciliation' that takes place when a wrong-doer begs pardon of his own village or that of his father (*vide supra*, p. 101). For a private individual only his own village is concerned, but if the exile happens to be a senior headman then all the villages of the chiefdom participate. A detailed account of such a feast, which we attended, is given on pp. 271–4.

166 795 578 In a civilized society social separation overcomes friction in two ways: first, it separates individuals who are personally incompatible, and secondly, it provides the individual who is a misfit in one group with a choice of groups whose values may be more compatible with his own than those of the group from which he came.[1] In Nyakyusa society villages were formerly all of the same type, with virtually identical group values, therefore the individual only escaped from personal incompatibilities by moving. In the modern society, however, there is a variation of type as between pagan and Christian villages and, among the Christians, as between the several denominations. The convert in a pagan village often moves to a Christian village finding that more compatible, and the son of a Christian, having abandoned Christianity and perhaps married several wives, leaves the Christian village in which he grew up and joins a pagan one with whose members he has more in common.

578 166 754 The Nyakyusa, in their rationalizations about witchcraft, recognize the fact that friction is often personal and may be overcome by moving. Constantly villages receive individuals who have been driven out of some other village for practising witchcraft, and when we inquired whether a man who had once been accused was not feared as a neighbour, the reply was always in the same tenor as that of Mwamunda: 'Perhaps he has bewitched his fellows there, we do not know, but he has not bewitched us.' There is also the implication that quarrels may be forgotten after a temporary separation, since those who have moved because they feared witchcraft, and even some who have been accused of practising witchcraft, are welcomed back.

578 166 When our informants discussed moving and returning to the home village they always emphasized friction with one's fellows (*abanine*) as providing the chief impetus to move, and the desire

[1] cf. G. and M. Wilson, op. cit., pp. 60–1.

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621 561 562 on the other hand, come from many villages, and they move from village to village more than men, because most women are inherited at least once in their lives. Nor do the women form an age-set, for men inherit wives as old, or older than themselves, and they continue to marry young brides until they themselves are elderly. A village thus contains women of all ages, the older ones often being quite late-comers to it. There is neither the unity of a kinship group, with leadership of mother or grandmother, as among a matrilineal people like the Bemba, nor the leadership of the mother-in-law as among the patrilineal Nguni and Sotho peoples. It is true that among the latter peoples the leadership of women devolves on a man's senior wife when his mother is dead, but the pattern has developed in a society in which daughters-in-law usually live for a long time in the same homestead as their mother-in-law, whereas among the pagan Nyakyusa a woman rarely joins her own son until she is decrepit, long after his marriage. When the Nguni or Sotho chief wife is obeyed by her co-wives it is as the successor of her mother-in-law; indeed on the latter's death she is often referred to by junior wives as 'mother'. Where women have authority in a patrilineal society it is usually as mother, or grandmother, or father's sister. But there are none with such positions in the context of the age-village; the office of headman is not hereditary so there is no mother of the heir, and the headman's own mother and sisters normally live elsewhere.

562 613 595 Such solidarity and leadership as exist among women in pagan Nyakyusa society are within the group of women of the same lineage who live together. Great emphasis is laid on the propriety of a wife bringing a younger sister, or brother's daughter, as a junior wife for her husband (*ukusakula*): this is felt to be a compliment to the husband and a comfort to the wife, proof that the marriage has been a success. Co-wives who are of the same lineage are very closely identified, their children being treated almost as full siblings, and they themselves co-operating in everything.

562 795 One of the marked changes in contemporary Nyakyusa society is the development of leadership among women in the Christian congregations.

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(c) *'The Curse' of Christians* — MISFORTUNES ATTRIBUTED TO MYSTICAL CAUSES—contd.

No.	Category of Sufferer	Misfortune	Alleged sin	Category of individual or group believed to have called down a curse
1	Ex-schoolboy	Cannot get a job	Disobeyed his Nyakyusa teacher	Teacher
2	Ex schoolboy	Dismissed from government job. Reason unknown. Unemployed	Sent to boarding school with mission money, then refused to work for mission. Later married 12 wives. He also stole	The congregation
3	Teacher, son of elder	Eaten by a crocodile (seven years after sinning)	Committed adultery with daughter of chief. Spoke against the church	The congregation
4	Son of elder	Died of venereal disease	Committed adultery	The congregation
5	Pagan man	Died	Refused food to travelling Christian elder	The elder
6	Mohammedan man	Cut his leg with his hoe	Hoed on Sunday	Two Christian men
7	Ex-schoolboy	Always lost his job though clever and good English-speaker. Now a fisherman and 'talks English to the fish'	Not known	European missionary
8	Ex-boarding schoolboy	Cannot get a job. 'Just hoeing like uneducated people'	Eloped with a girl betrothed to a fellow Christian	European missionary
9	Christian woman	Paralysed for sixteen years	Took an unfair share of meat at feasts	Christian neighbours
10	Man-servant of missionary	Married several times. Each time wife died	Dressed in missionary's clothes and sat at table pretending to write with his pen	European missionary
11	Rich man	Property disappeared	Caught with a woman and denied having committed adultery	European missionary (said to have uttered a conditional curse: 'If you are lying all your property will disappear')
12	Woman	Became a wanderer	Stole things from loft of mother-in-law's hut. Disobeyed husband and complained of him to neighbours. Asked for divorce	European missionary
13	Young man, newly married	Did not beget a child	Did not make a wedding feast for his neighbours in Christian village	Christian neighbours (complaining they had eaten no meat). Young man's pagan 'mothers' inquired of diviner and this was the diagnosis

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33. SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES IN CHRISTIAN VILLAGES

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a. Christian suing a Christian

Mundekesye (appointed by the Church to settle disputes in villages on Itete mission land).

'Nsangalofu (a Christian elder) accused Jonah's son, Lwimkio, of making love to the wife of Nsangalofu's son, Nkisu. I (Mundekesye) was trying the case between Nkisu and Lwimiko. Lwimiko denied everything, but Nkisu's wife said: "Yes, he was making love to me; he did so on three occasions." I gave judgement, saying: "You Lwimiko, are guilty, because the woman admits it," and ordered Lwimiko to pay a cow. Lwimiko refused, so I took the case to the Court. I reported my decision and Lwimiko's refusal to pay. The Court asked Lwimiko why he refused to pay up when the woman admitted their guilt, and ordered him to pay a cow.

'I reported the case to Mwangomo (the chief in whose country Mundekesye lives), but as it was quite clear I took it direct to Court. Difficult cases I take to Mwangomo before they go on to Court.

'Nsangalofu and Nkisu brought the case to me. I called the elders of the Church to be present at the hearing of the case. The congregation notified Mwakapelela (the European missionary who lives on another station) and he ordered that Lwimiko should move off mission land. Lwimiko and Nkisu had both built in Mpanda (a boys' village on mission land).'

b. Arbitration between Christians

Asagene (Christian deacon in Itete).

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'Mogege accused Amanise of stealing a cloth belonging to him, and brought Amanise before his fellows. He brought him to Rheuben, near whom he lives.

'Amanise denied the accusation, so the case was taken to Mundekesye (*vide supra*). Mundekesye tried the case with "all the congregation" (i.e. elders and deacons and anyone who cared to attend the court) and found Amanise guilty. The case was then taken before the missionary who ordered that Amanise should be fined 5s. and suspended from membership of the Church. He also ordered that should he refuse to pay he should move off mission land, because this was the

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second occasion on which he had been found guilty of theft. (The elders of the congregation had suggested turning Amanise off mission land immediately, but the missionary advised giving him a second chance and fining him.)'

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TO WHOM DO THEY PRAY?

Abanyafyale, abanyafyale bikwiputa kugu?
Abanyafyale, abanyafyale bikwiputa kugu?
Kubasyuka! Kubasyuka!

Chorus: Alikumwanya! Alikumwanya!

Abasungu, abasungu bikwiputa kugu?
Abasungu, abasungu bikwiputa kugu?
Kundalama! Kundalama!

Chorus: Alikumwanya! Alikumwanya!

Abisilamu, abisilamu, bikwiputa kugu?
Abisilamu, abisilamu, bikwiputa kugu?
Kwa Mohamedi! Kwa Mohamedi!

Chorus: Alikumwanya! Alikumwanya!

Abosigwa, abosigwa, bikwiputa kugu?
Abosigwa, abosigwa, bikwiputa kugu?
Kwa Jesu! Kwa Jesu!

Chorus: Alikumwanya! Alikumwanya!

Translation

The chiefs, the chiefs to whom do they pray?
The chiefs, the chiefs to whom do they pray?
To the shades! To the shades!

Chorus: He is above! He is above!

The Europeans, the Europeans to whom do they pray?
The Europeans, the Europeans to whom do they pray?
To money! To money!

Chorus: He is above! He is above!

The Mohammedans, the Mohammedans to whom do they pray?
The Mohammedans, the Mohammedans to whom to they pray?
To Mohammed! To Mohammed!

Chorus: He is above! He is above!

The baptised, the baptised to whom do they pray?
The baptised, the baptised to whom do they pray?
To Jesus! To Jesus!

Chorus: He is above! He is above!

(Song of Nyakyusa Christians)

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forted, I think people follow the custom, many have come to see me.'

There is no criticism of men or women who come to a burial to dance rather than to weep: 'They are not relatives—it is our custom of mourning.' They are saluting the dead and 'seeing him on his way', they are helping 'to comfort the relatives'. The presence of non-relatives at a burial is variously determined by feelings of affection and grief, of respect and sympathy for the family, by a sense of shame, by fear of being accused of witchcraft, and finally by the attraction of the crowds, the lively conversation, the dancing, and the meat.

At the burial of a Nyakyusa Christian there is little unrestrained wailing and no dancing; instead the young men of the congregation gather round the grieving relatives and sing cheerful hymns, full of the certainty of Heaven, 'to accompany him on his way to God' and 'to comfort the mourners'.

(*e*) *Prestige at funerals*

As has already been indicated, the length of the mourning depends upon the status of the deceased. It is short for a child—there is no sacrifice and no crowd; for a rich man it is longer than for a poor man; for the kinsman of a chief longer than for a commoner. Mwaikambo explained:

> Many conceal their position (*ubufumuke*), it only appears at death. People may never know that a man is rich—only those who build close to him will know—but when he dies many know; many people come to the funeral. For a commoner, an ordinary person, the drums usually play a lament for two days only, sometimes for three, but for a village headman they play the lament for four days, or perhaps a week, and also for a man who has married a chief's daughter it continues for four days or a week. Then people ask why the drums are playing for so long and the reply comes: 'He married into the chief's family. The chief honours him in kinship.' Drums follow the importance of a man.
>
> Those who stay longest at a funeral are kinsmen. If a man has many kinsmen then the funeral will last long because his kinsmen do not return home quickly. A chief has many kinsmen, more than anyone else, because the people of his chiefdom are all like kinsmen. With a village headman also the people who build with him are somewhat like kinsmen, and his funeral lasts a long time.

The size of the crowd at a funeral depends very largely upon the amount of meat provided, and this in turn depends upon th

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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881 585 her mother-in-law covers her head with a red cloth 'for display'. 'We are rejoicing because our child has grown up,' and she too takes her on her shoulders and dances with her. When the 'husbands' come to dance the stamping dance: 'It too is a rejoicing. It shows I have married a wife now.' All through there is rejoicing over the fine food, and the celebration and feasting is primarily among the women. The culmination comes when the girl is publicly shown to be a virgin and the mothers can claim the bull crying in exultation: 'It's ours, it's ours.'

881 585 184 ●795 An interesting sidelight on the attitude of girls towards the ritual came from a young man, a Christian, who was betrothed to a pagan girl and had forbidden her to go through the ritual. He said:

> Once my wife, when she had reached puberty, asked me why I objected to her undergoing the puberty ritual. I said it was forbidden for us Christians to participate in it, and I asked her if she wished to do so. She said 'Yes', and I asked why. She said: 'When the ritual is performed for us we are famed. People tell each other that so-and-so's daughter has grown up and people from far away come to sing songs, so we become very well known. See, now I have grown up, but no one sees that I have done so. Only you know.' Then I said: 'We Christians also have the custom of celebrating growing up at the handing over of marriage-cattle to the father (*ukukwa*). We do not hand over cattle when girls are still small, so everyone sees that a girl has grown up when we do so.' She agreed and said: 'I, also, have seen a little of the handing over of cattle among Christians.'

In fact, the *ukukwa* is the occasion for a great feast among Christians to which many young men and girls come to sing and dance.

881 585 The giving of presents to the bride by her father and his contemporaries is interpreted as part of the rejoicing.

431 To give presents (*ukubonola*) is to rejoice. It's an occasion for display and rejoicing, because the girl has grown up. The father gives her a present because he rejoices that she has grown up. He says to her: 'Congratulations, you have grown up, you are going away to your husband, you are going away to gain a child!'

881 585 602a During the period of seclusion the girl's father is spoken of as her father-in-law (*unkamwana*). She must *ukutila* (respect and avoid) him:

> Because he is her father who begot her. She thinks: 'I must respect

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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ritual they distinguish *abakamu* (kinsmen) from *abandu itolo* (non-relatives) or *abapakipanga* (villagers), and *abakikolo* (those of the lineage of a dead man) from *abako* (affines) and mother's relatives (*abipwa*). These categories have different functions.

(*b*) *Christians*

The performance of family rituals is complicated by the fact that 16 per cent of the Nyakyusa are professing Christians, and in almost every lineage there are individuals who withdraw from the full performance of traditional rituals at death, puberty, and marriage, birth, and misfortune. In most cases such a withdrawal is treated tolerantly by the pagan kinsmen: the Christian kinsmen come to mourn, to congratulate the bride, to express sympathy with the parents of twins; and their non-participation in the washing and shaving and avoidance of ritual meat and beer is accepted. At the funeral of Mwamulenga his preceding full brother, who should have been a principal in the death ritual, was a Christian, and he took no part, though his children went through it. At the funeral of Mwampiki (p. 248) one boy was left untreated on the ground that he was a Christian and a Christian 'should not have two gods'. At the puberty ritual of Mwaihojo's daughter (p. 91) the brother called to wash with her was influenced by Christians and was reluctant to take part, though he finally did so.

Only when a son who is heir to family wealth, or to the office of chieftainship or priesthood refuses the inheritance of widows (as a Christian must do) is there very strong pressure on him to conform to traditional custom: the union of the heir with the widows is held essential to their health. Sometimes also there is acute conflict between different members of the family over the performance of an autopsy, the pagans pressing for it and the Christians opposing it. This we saw in the death of E. when her pagan senior brother wished to examine her, and her Christian junior brother opposed him vehemently.

That Christians cannot take part in certain of the rituals[1] and do not suffer if they omit them is generally accepted. The farewell to the dead at the homestead of the deceased, and the treatment of kinsmen of twins, fall into this category. About certain other rituals, such as the ritual of the gasping cough and the protection against sorcery, opinions are divided. Some of our Christian friends insisted that 'the gasping cough is a real illness' and cited

[1] There are minor differences in the rules of the different missions.

2: Wilson E-5 (1934-1938)1957 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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795 184 788 the case of a Christian who had stayed away from a ritual in his family and 'as soon as he met his relatives he fell sick and coughed like an animal. So they got some of the lees of the beer and gave it to him and he recovered.' A number of Christian kinsmen, leaders in the Church, did not come to the gasping-cough ritual which we attended, but others did come and sipped the beer, or had the lees sent to them at their homes. In the ritual for protection against sorcery which we watched a Christian brother and his wife took part.

And some Christians, though they deny the necessity of many of the pagan rituals for themselves as Christians, still believe them to be necessary to their pagan kinsmen. Hence the anomalous (and to the missionaries the highly unorthodox) position of a woman professing Christianity and acting as officiant in a pagan ritual, as did N. in the death ritual for Kalata's mother (p. 239). N., it will be remembered, came by night. The officiant who performed the ritual for Mwakobela's twins was under instruction as a Christian and was proposing to hand on her medicines to her daughter, a pagan, when she herself was received into the Church. She explained this when Mwakobela (her patient) asked her: 'And what shall we do for twin medicine when you become a Christian?' And we had little doubt that she believed in the efficacy of her medicine for pagans.

Though Christians cannot go through pagan rituals as principals they do not withdraw altogether: they often help their pagan neighbours as grave-diggers at a funeral and in the provision of food for guests at funerals and marriages; and the young men and girls may dance as a separate group, singing their own [578] songs or hymns and ignoring the drums. Sometimes acute rivalry between the two groups of dancers is apparent.

771 177 The effect of Christian teaching on pagan ritual is not limited to the partial withdrawal of professing Christians. In those villages most influenced by missions, such as Ilolo, near Rungwe, there is considerable scepticism among pagans, and many of them curtail the rituals in their families, or do not attend them. The Christian view is that 'the pagans see that the Christians disregard the rituals and nothing happens to them, so they begin to ignore them too'. 'Pagans fear much less than they used to do.'

177 464 Men who are in European employment either inside or outside the district cannot attend all the rituals. Their case is partially met by keeping the lees of the ritual beer with which to treat them

8:Wilson E-5 (1934-1936)1936 FN17 Ngonde FN17
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And every year two hereditary Kinga priests come a three days journey from their own country to participate in the sacrifice of a black cow to the spirits of Lwembe and his descendants.

Down by Lake Nyasa, in the extreme South East of the Nyakyusa district, there is another equally sacred spot where sacrifices were, and believe still are[21] made to Kyala, a younger brother of Lwembe.

The Christians and the Moslems form other religious groups which transcend the boundaries of a single chiefdom, but an examination of the Nyakyusa Christian and Moslem communities is beyond the scope of this paper.

The political group which is constituted by a Court district, though only ten years old, is of great importance in Nyakyusa society; but here again the detailed examination of its organization and the relationships of its members is beyond the scope of this paper.

Conclusion: Culture and Society

The aim of sociology is to describe single forms of society fully and, in comparison with one another, to explain them completely, in so far as reasons can be found within this particular scientific field. Neither full description nor complete explanation of Nyakyusa society has here been attempted: many important facts have been omitted from the account, irregularities of detail have been slurred over, the connections of fact have been only occasionally and sketchily established, and no systematic comparison of this unit with others has been made at all.

But the method of this paper has involved an analysis, summary and general though it has been, of the nature of some of the many institutions in which the Nyakyusa meet, of some of the actual elements in their relationships with one another. It is in their dealings with the earth and their cattle, with the spirits and with men who break the law, in their discussions and arguments, their ceremonial feasts, their giving and receiving, in their loves and hates and in their admiration and mockery of one another that they forever make and remake their own human relationships.

Culture is the matter of which society is the form; inseparable in fact they are only intelligible together. No two men can be related unless they both do something and unless their activities are somehow connected. Nor can either escape relationship with his fellow if what

[21] I have not yet been there to investigate.

9: Wilson
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[For data on the various Christian sects and their missionary activities, see category 116, pp. 166-202./

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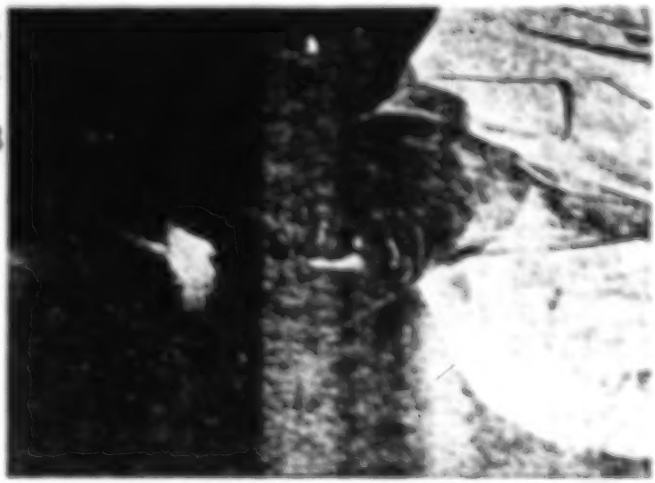

188. NYAMIKO, LEADER OF THE AFRICAN NATIONAL CHURCH

189. NDEBELA, FOUNDER OF A SEPARATIST CHURCH

[opp. p. 166]

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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conscious. This disintegration of a former coherence, and a decreasing awareness of the meaning of symbols used, are perhaps characteristic of changing societies in Africa.

Despite the growth of the Christian Church, the great demand for schools, and the dropping of the old rituals directed to family shades and the heroes, belief in the power of medicines flourishes. Probably most deaths and misfortunes are still attributed to an enemy using either witchcraft or sorcery. The traditional belief in witchcraft is rejected by educated people, but belief in the power of medicines is general. Autopsies still take place and occasionally the poison ordeal is administered in secrecy; one case was mentioned which occurred in 1942. As we have seen, medicines have always been regarded as a potential instrument of individual competition. They are used in the rituals of kinship to ensure health, fertility, and good manners and morals; in the ritual of chieftainship to buttress authority, and in 'sprinkling the homesteads' to fertilize the fields; but also by individuals to steal the fertility of their neighbours' fields and to grow rich at the expense of their neighbours, and it is their use as an instrument of individual aggrandisement that is most talked of today. There were many reports of their use by rivals to office as chiefs, and the floods of 1955, which washed away the Mbaka bridge and caused a serious landslide on that river, were interpreted as incidents in a prolonged fight between chiefs who were rivals for the position of paramount. The deaths of the heir of one of them in 1953, and of the other chief himself in 1956, were also attributed to their duel with medicines.

Along with the political changes there has been a development of the Churches, more particularly of the Moravian Church, which is now largely self-supporting, with growing congregations served by African ministers.[1] Until 1938 the two main Protestant missions in Nyakyusa valley, the Moravian and Lutheran, were staffed by Germans and their funds came mainly from Germany. The war meant the withdrawal of the missionaries and the cutting off of funds. After a lapse of three years one Moravian missionary, and later one Lutheran, came to take charge of the missions and they were reinforced by other missionaries after the end of the war, but the whole policy in both missions is to build up self-supporting churches staffed by African pastors.

The work of the White Fathers mission was not interrupted by

[1] Change in Ngonde is not discussed.

9: Wilson E-5 (1934-1955) 1959
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the war and the form of its activities has not altered appreciably. Three other missions based elsewhere now have small congregations in the District and a Lutheran pastor under discipline broke away and formed his own 'independent' Church, which differs from the other 'independent' Churches in that the rule of monogamy is enforced.

The total number of converts has increased very considerably, much more than keeping pace with the increase in population; taking the three main missions together, their converts form over 14 per cent of the total population.[1] Figures for the five mission Churches with small congregations in the District—Pentecostal Holiness, Assemblies of God, Seventh Day Adventists, Anglican, and Watch Tower—are not available. Nor do we know the membership of one of the 'independent' African Churches, but supposing the membership of the missions with small congregations in the District to be 2,000 (a conservative estimate) the percentage claiming to be Christian is 24 per cent as against 16 per cent in 1938. Dissimilarities in the response to Christian teaching in different areas are very marked. Around Rungwe, the main Moravian mission-station, the bulk of the population is Christian, and the whole atmosphere is that of a Christian community, whereas in Selya, where mission work began in 1891 as it did in Rungwe, Christians still form a small minority in dominantly pagan chiefdoms. The reasons for this difference are complex. One factor is that Selya is geographically isolated whereas Rungwe is near a main road and within easy reach of the Government and trading centre Tukuyu; but much more important have been differences in mission policy regarding education, and differences in the personalities of missionaries, chiefs, and early converts.

The change from a society based on kinship to one based on voluntary association is apparent in the economic field as well as in the religious. Co-operative societies formed by producers of coffee and rice, which collect and market the crops, and give opportunity

[1] Figures supplied by the courtesy of the missionaries directing each mission and the leaders of two 'independent' Churches were as follows for 1954:

Moravians		29,590
Lutherans		10,000 (approximately)
Roman Catholic		4,700
Last Church (Ngemela) (Also called 'Native Mission')	('independent')	10,781
'African Lutheran Church'	('independent')	200

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tructure? And how far does the new economic and political rganization produce a change in religion? These theoretical uestions can be answered only by a series of comparative studies. Here there is evidence for one area alone, and the connexions vhich we postulate can be established only if they hold in a whole ange of societies.

Christianity implies an emergence from the nexus of kinship, or the worshipping group is two or three believers, not a body of insmen, and conversion is a personal choice. This is more obvious n a missionary church than in one long established, for, as we ave seen, the convert in a pagan community must withdraw from is kinsfolk to become a Christian,[1] but it remains true, even in a Christian society. The new doctrine implies a body of believers— Church. The particular form varies, but the Church has ppeared wherever the Christian faith has been established. n short, we argue that the change in religion necessarily disrupts n organization based primarily on kinship and establishes a ew type of organization based partly on voluntary association. With the change from the ritual of the lineage to the ritual of the Church the authority and leadership of senior kinsmen is diminished; they are replaced by 'elders' and priests or pastors whose asis of authority is not birth, but selection by the Church. Furthermore, association for worship becomes a pattern for ssociation in other fields, and the Church is the training ground mong the Nyakyusa, as it has been among so many other peoples, or organizers of other types of societies.

And not only is kinship subordinated to faith; the forms of inship are themselves modified. From the time of their first rrival the missionaries have taught that Christianity implies nonogamy and they have baptized no polygynist who does not ut away his additional wives. This teaching has been questioned y many Africans and by some European missionaries themselves, who doubt the wisdom of persuading a man already married to end away his wives—or even of countenancing such an action. But the rule of monogamy has remained as a condition of membership in all the Churches with European connexions.[2] It has been ejected, as we have seen, by two of the 'independent' African

[1] *ibid.*, pp. 197-9.

[2] The rule was suspended for a brief period in one mission working not far from he Nyakyusa area, but was later enforced. cf. Lyndon Harries in *Survey of African Marriage and Family Life* (edited by A. Phillips), pp. 341-2.

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articular symbols are tied to a particular social structure; the poet makes his choice within the whole range of the familiar.

The impetus to change has come both from the religious field and from the secular. For example, the pressure towards monogamy among the Nyakyusa has been religious; given plentiful land and cash crops additional wives are an economic asset, not a liability. In this respect the contrast with the Ciskei in South Africa, where families are dependent for food on wage-earners in towns, and no man can support two families,[1] is marked. On the other hand, the decay of Nyakyusa age-villages is primarily due to economic pressure, though it is facilitated by the insistence of Christians that there is no danger in father-in-law and daughter-in-law meeting one another. The first generation of Christians living on mission land built villages apart for their sons, despite the teaching that avoidance of a father-in-law by his daughter-in-law was foolish, if not sinful. But a radical change in pagan observance of ritual avoidance is brought about by the general practice of going out to work for long periods, and the competition for coffee and rice-lands, which makes the territorial separation of fathers and sons impossible. As we have shown, young men going to work commonly leave their wives in their fathers' homesteads, valuing the support and supervision given them there above the old stringency of avoidance and, where land is scarce and valuable, fathers do not move aside each generation to make way for their sons. Avoidance between father-in-law and daughter-in-law continues only in an attenuated form.

From German times control by a European government has compelled a modification of the traditional sacrifices to the heroes and of the ritual of chieftainship. How the Kinga priests came to Lubaga 'in secret' and how they failed to instal a new Lwembe after the death of Mwakisisya about 1914 has been described. Killing a child to anoint a drum or make medicine for the fields, compelling a man to accept a dangerous office, killing chiefs because they are ailing, or plucking off their nails before they die; all these are actions which are held, and must be held, to be 'contrary to natural justice' by any Western government. Here the change in political organization compels a change in ritual and there is evidence that belief in the traditional forms is much diminished, though not dead. The European government also

[1] Keiskammahoek Rural Survey. Vol. ii, *The Economy of a Native Reserve*, by D. H. Houghton and E. M. Walton; vol. iii, *Social Structure*, by M. Wilson *et al.*